

# Negro Housing

PHYSICAL ASPECTS  
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS  
HOME OWNERSHIP AND FINANCING



**JOHN IHLDER**





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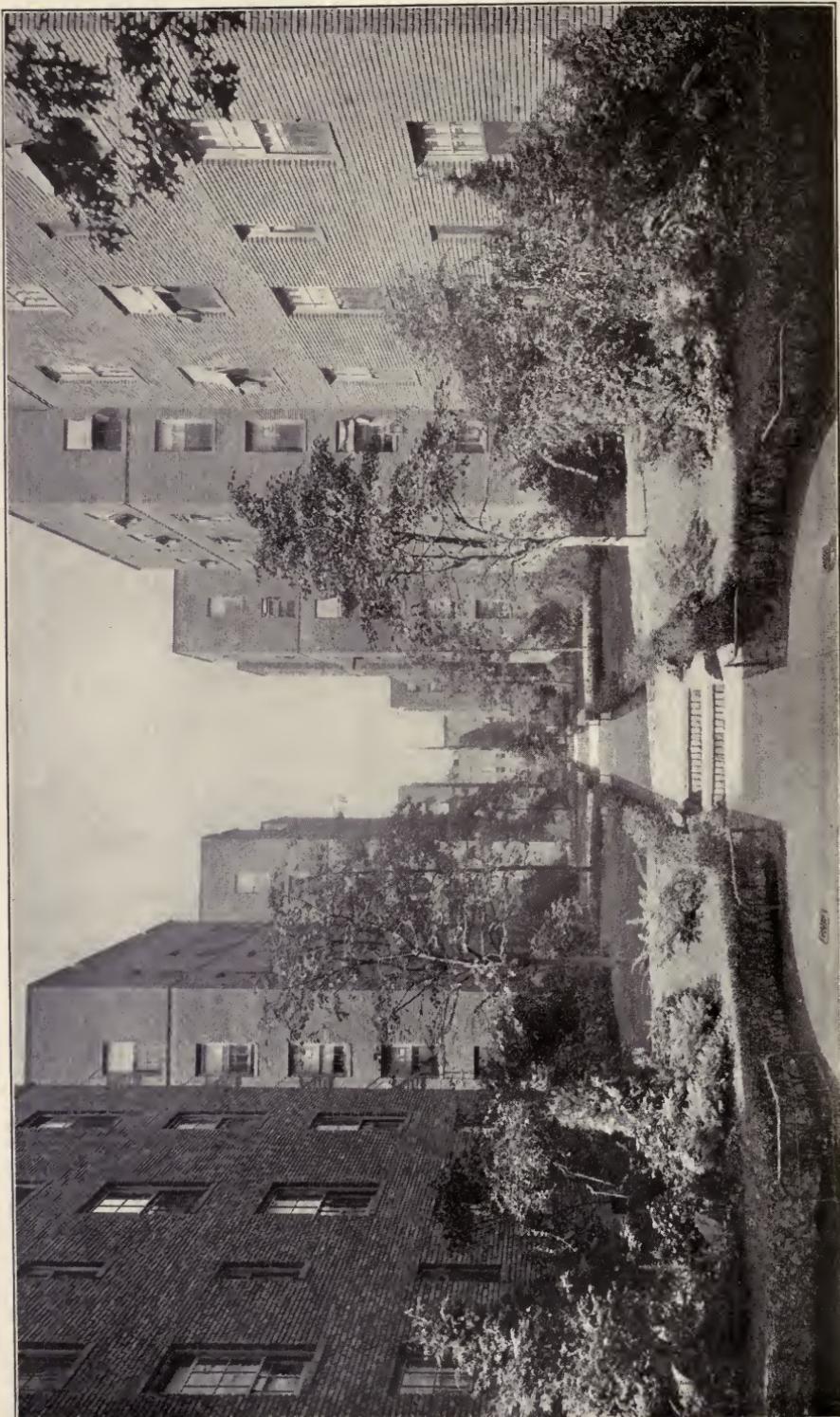
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# Negro Housing

*Report of the*  
**COMMITTEE ON NEGRO HOUSING**  
NANNIE H. BURROUGHS, *Chairman*

*Prepared for the Committee*  
by  
CHARLES S. JOHNSON

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THE PRESIDENT'S CONFERENCE ON HOME  
BUILDING AND HOME OWNERSHIP  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

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## FOREWORD

In the housing of Negro citizens, particularly in cities, our philosophy of individual responsibility for shelter has proved to be inadequate. Consider the situation of the typical family of Negro migrants from the farm of the South to the great industrial city of the North. With habits adapted to an isolated cabin, where space simplified sanitary problems, water was taken from a well, and cooking done perhaps in a fireplace, the family shifts to the midst of a crowded city. Their poverty forces them, as it forces all immigrants, into the most deteriorated residential sections. They crowd in one or two rooms of a dilapidated house, share a hall toilet with several other families, often cook in a closet, and three or four may sleep in a room. The residents of the area in which they live pay no taxes and have no influence so the municipality tends to overlook their needs for utilities, and to ignore violations of the housing and sanitary codes. Racial as well as economic factors restrict them to limited areas. Consequently, additional immigrants increase the overcrowding. The excess of demand over supply permits rent profiteering. High rents and low wages mean that the mother must go to work and that the family must share its already inadequate space with lodgers, with consequent ill effects on family life and morals. In addition, the dilapidated areas into which Negroes are forced are frequently the areas of prostitution and crime. Under these conditions it is not to be wondered at that the mortality rate for Negroes is more than twice that for whites in the same cities.

Perhaps the worst aspect of the entire situation is that the factor of racial segregation makes it exceedingly difficult for any Negro family, no matter what its character or aspirations, to escape these conditions. It is difficult for them to get into more desirable residential sections; there are few new developments in accessible areas for Negroes; the cost of home-financing for them is frequently excessive.

These conditions of Negro housing in our cities are not the result of any wilful inhumanity on the part of our society. On the contrary, they merely emphasize the present shortcomings of our individualistic theory of housing, and the failure which grows

out of expecting each person in our highly complex industrial civilization to provide his own housing as best he may. The Negro's housing problem is part of the general problem of providing enough housing of acceptable standards for the low-income groups in our society. Racial factors and the primitive housing conditions to which he has been accustomed, and which necessitate a more drastic readjustment than for other groups, contribute to make the Negro the worst sufferer.

What is the solution? It is not to attempt to do something for Negro housing alone. It is not to supply homes to Negroes through private or public charity. It is to reorganize our practices in the planning and production of all housing. We must begin with the theory. The realization of community responsibility for housing must take the place of our present concept of individual responsibility. The technique which the application of this new theory makes necessary has been formulated for the first time with some completeness by the President's Conference. When cities are planned in neighborhood units, there will be no homes backed up against stock yards or railroad tracks. When proper zoning regulations are enforced it will be impossible to crowd houses on land and to crowd people in houses. When minimum standards for housing are established and enforced in all our cities, and housing meeting those standards is made available for all people in the low-income groups—by reduction in the cost of construction and home-financing, by the cooperation of private initiative and government in slum clearance and rebuilding, by extensive reconditioning and remodeling of existing dwellings, and by the many other means proposed by the Conference—when these things are accomplished, the insanitary overcrowding typical of Negro quarters in our cities will be a thing of the past.

In so far as the Negro is the victim of special handicaps, such as those arising from segregation, low wages, rent profiteering, and unusual difficulties of adjustment, special measures must be taken for him. Education—training the Negro to seek and maintain higher standards of housing—is perhaps of primary importance. The provision of good housing will do more than anything else to consolidate such education.

The report of the Committee on Negro Housing is distinguished by its objectivity. For that reason it compels unusual attention. It

is our duty to see that it bears fruit in action. The committee points out that more than forty notable surveys and investigations of Negro housing conditions have from time to time shocked the public into temporary interest, but have brought little if any permanent improvement in these conditions because they were not followed up. That should not be the fate of this present survey.

July 1, 1932

ROBERT P. LAMONT.



## INTRODUCTION

The conditions of Negro housing and the means of their improvement are an immediate and urgent personal problem for nearly twelve million of the American population who are Negroes. The whole population of America is in many ways affected by the conditions of living of Negro families as it is by the housing problems of all other elements of our population. The health of the community is affected by poor sanitation endured by any of its citizens. The safety of the community is equally affected by dilapidation, needless fire risks or other dangers. Exploitation or injustice, wherever they may occur, exert a poisonous influence upon general social attitudes and ideals and may create habits of thought and action which spread the evil to other social groups or permeate the entire social fabric.

In organizing a nation-wide Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership it was essential to deal directly and squarely with this problem. Although others of the thirty-one committees of the Conference touched upon Negro housing here and there in the course of their reports it was clear that there should be a special committee representing the leading thinkers among our twelve million Negroes and made up like the other committees of persons who have already devoted much attention and thought to the problems in question. It was fortunately possible to secure the services of Negro social workers, realtors, business men, university presidents and professors, representatives of foundations and others intimately concerned with one aspect or another of housing. The North and the South, the cities and the rural communities were represented.

As this committee considered for our Negro population all of the problems covered by the thirty other committees of the Conference it was larger in its membership than the average and had somewhat larger funds at its disposal than most other committees save that on Farm and Village Housing which represented not one-tenth but two-fifths of our population. This final report of the Committee on Negro Housing is to our minds an ample justification of this procedure.

To anyone familiar with the subject matter of this volume, it will be at once apparent that it is the most comprehensive and

valuable document on Negro Housing that has been issued up to this time. The committee has sifted, analyzed and made use of all of the available material previously published on this subject and has had access to many unpublished studies in the possession of social service agencies and the universities. With restraint and fair-mindedness they have presented the facts as they find them and have cited their references so that the future student of the subject may go back to the original sources if he should have need to pursue the subject further. In view of the fact that the committee had only one-half year at its disposal for the compilation of its report and to conduct its researches, it has presented a surprisingly well-rounded picture of the conditions of Negro housing in those areas in which the Negro population is relatively large.

Further researches will doubtless be needed, for the studies made prior to this report and upon which it was based, have been sporadic and limited. Appreciating this fact the committee has outlined among its recommendations those studies which in its judgment are in need of immediate and detailed research. With the report of the Committee on Negro Housing as a basis and background, such future researches should commend themselves to the philanthropic foundations interested in Negro welfare and to the research departments in social sciences of our leading universities and state agricultural colleges.

JOHN M. GRIES,  
JAMES FORD.

June 28, 1932.

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## NEGRO HOUSING

### PREFACE

The Negro population of America, due to factors in its history, constitutes at present a considerable proportion of the familiar low-income group families and, in like manner, has in its own composition a larger proportion of families of this level than is true of other groups of the population. In housing, the process of selection and segregation normally follows economic lines. If this were all, there would be no reason for discussing Negro housing apart from the simple factors of economic status and selection. It would be understood that the same general conditions operate to fix the physical limits of their residence and, in so far as the causes are common, the remedies have no need to vary.

Quite apart, however, from these simple economic factors are social and cultural factors to be reckoned with in the question of Negro housing which tend, on the one hand, to give greater intensity and permanence to their economic segregation, and, on the other hand, to create novel difficulties which other groups experience only slightly or not at all. It is for this reason, principally, that Negro housing is isolated for special discussion. Such isolation, however, has no need to include other than these specific problems and a measure of the extent to which they are realistically registered in the physical surroundings of this group, and in their exaggerated social consequences.

This population, it may be conceded, is not now so essentially different from the American culture in size of family or requirement of security, comfort, cleanliness, and beauty as to demand different patterns of dwellings or different measures in other of the essentials of living. Thus, it may be assumed that the normal basis for the establishment of an American home, with respect to location, equipment, care, and ownership, is not only acceptable but a requisite of that type of citizenship which is the objective of these inquiries.

Many factors have combined to obscure the basic problems of Negro housing. Most of the studies have been made without reference to the pattern of the city, or the natural factors, apart from race, responsible for conditions. They have, almost invariably, been restricted studies of deteriorated areas which ignored

the process by which these areas were selected. The literature of Negro housing is virtually a literature of the slums. The fact is scarcely challengeable, but it has been sought, commonly and unfortunately, to explain these in terms of a fixed destiny, a propensity to depreciation, a uniform emotional adjustment to the setting, an ability to subsist on less than others require.

The factors which appear to constitute Negro housing a distinct problem may be listed as follows:

1. The course of selection and segregation which, almost without exception, draws the Negro population into the most deteriorated residence sections of the city. This is in part the process of city growth, in part economic selection and segregation, and in part racial selection.

The tendency to compactness and group solidarity. This is enforced in part from without and in part from within.

2. The accelerated rate of deterioration inherent in the character of Negro properties, due to age and use.

3. The depreciation of property values attributed to Negro occupancy or proximity. This is in part economic and in part psychological.

4. Segregation legislation designed to restrict areas of residence as a public measure.

5. Restrictive compacts and covenants, designed to restrict areas of Negro residence as a private measure.

6. Objection of white residents to the presence of Negroes in certain areas, as registered in:

- (a) Clashes,

- (b) Bombings of property,

- (c) Intimidation.

7. Exclusion of the Negroes from new housing developments.

8. Limitation of facilities for financing of Negro home ownership.

9. Increased rentals with Negro occupancy.

10. Factors related to the level of culture of the majority population of the Negro group, as reflected in the care of property.

11. The relation of such physical factors as excessive congestion, and physical deterioration to correspondingly excessive rates of delinquency and mortality in Negro areas.

The Negro population in 1930 was 11,891,143, or about 10 per cent of the total population. It is unevenly distributed throughout the United States in proportions varying from less than 1 per cent to as much as 50 per cent, which obtains in Mississippi. Four-fifths of this population resides in the South, and until recently has been predominantly rural. The movement to cities, however, definitely noted in 1880, has been proceeding with accelerated pace. Between 1910 and 1920 the rate of increase for

urban centers was 32.3, while the rural areas showed an actual decrease of 3.3 per cent. Both southern and northern urban centers have felt this increase. In intersectional migration the tendency has been to remove from southern rural areas to northern urban centers. Cities of the North, accordingly, have shown increases ranging from 10 to 600 per cent. Chicago's Negro population in 1910 was 44,103; in 1930 it had increased to 233,903. Philadelphia's increased from 84,459 in 1910 to 219,599 in 1930, and that of New York, which has now perhaps the largest Negro population, from 91,709 to 327,706.

Where the proportions of Negroes in the total population change in these northern cities, the accepted social balance is disturbed, and this carries with it very special complications. The proportion of Negroes in the total population of New York increased from 1.9 in 1910 to 4.7 in 1930, in Cleveland from 1.5 to 7.9, in Philadelphia from 5.5 to 11.3, and in Detroit from 1.2 to 7.7. These are indications of the increase and accentuation of the social problems connected with housing for this group of the population. It is accepted as the task of this report to outline these problems.

\* \* \* \* \*

Some of the material in this volume consists of extracts from articles, books, and manuscripts based on studies of Negro housing. In some instances copies of the source are rare, a single copy being on file in a particular library (as for example the unpublished manuscript of local communities in Chicago—see footnote 3, Appendix II, p. 145). These sources have been available to the committee in the preparation of its report, although they have not been accessible to the editors and may not be to readers of the report. Such questions as may arise in regard to these materials may, therefore, be taken up with the committee through the chairman, group chairmen or secretary who will be glad to extend such helpful advice as possible.

# CHAPTER I

## PHYSICAL ASPECTS OF NEGRO HOUSING

### Negro Housing as a Phase of City Growth

In the normal expansion of a city there has been observed a fairly definite process of sifting and selection of different elements of the population. While the selection in its general aspects is economic and cultural, the realistic result approaches national and racial segregation. This process accounts for the existence of immigrant communities, popularly referred to as Chinatown, Shantytown, Jewtown, Little Italy, and "Black Belt" which takes a variety of descriptive names.

"As the city grows it expands outward from its center. This radial extension from the downtown business district toward the outskirts of the city is due partly to business and industrial pressure and partly to residential pull. Business and light manufacturing, as they develop, push out from the center of the city and encroach upon residence. At the same time, families are always responding to the appeal of more attractive residential districts, further and ever further removed from the center of the city."<sup>1</sup>

The process is a familiar one. A result of this is the virtual organization of the city into zones. There is a central business district, a zone in transition from residence to business, a zone of workingmen's homes, a residence zone, and a commuter's zone. So pronounced is this natural tendency, that city planning schemes have adopted the general outlines of this pattern, in their efforts to give stability and protection in the use of land for residence, business or manufacturing, according to the dominant character of the area.<sup>2</sup>

It is most important to give attention to this factor of city

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<sup>1</sup> Burgess, Ernest W., "Residential Segregation in American Cities," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, November, 1928, Vol. 140, pp. 105-115. See also: Park, Robert E., Burgess, E. W., and McKenzie, R. D., *The City*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1925, Chapter II; Wirth, Louis, *The Ghetto, A Study in Solution*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1928; and Woofter, T. J. Jr. and Associates, *Negro Problems in Cities*, Garden City, N. Y., Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1928.

<sup>2</sup> See definition of zoning in *A Zoning Primer*, by the Advisory Committee on City Planning and Zoning, Division of Building and Housing, Department of Commerce, 1926.

growth because it develops that the zone of transition, virtually in accordance with the laws of city growth, attracts immigrant and Negro populations. These are, economically, the least competent elements of the population, and to this inadequacy is added the well-nigh fixed physical limitations of the available dwellings. The common economic element in the situation is evident in the fact that the patterns of selection and segregation are in their first aspects similar for the lowest-income ranges of the immigrant groups and for Negroes. In such cities as Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, New York, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh, there may be noted an inevitable concentration of the bulk of the population in a few wards.<sup>3</sup>

One notable difference appears between the immigrant and Negro populations. In the case of the former, there is the possibility of escape, with improvement in economic status, in the second generation, to more desirable sections of the city. In the case of the Negroes, who remain a distinguishable group, the factor of race and certain definite racial attitudes favorable to their segregation, interpose difficulties to the breaking of the physical restrictions in residence areas. In southern cities where the immigrant population is negligible, there is commonly a concentration of the Negro population in these areas of transition, occasionally with a scattering of the poorest elements of the native white population.

### General Characteristics of Inherited Areas

Inasmuch as these interstitial areas represent the first residence sites of the city, the first important factor is the advanced age of the dwellings in these areas. Age carries with it the question of modern improvements in sanitation, the state of repair, the disproportionately large amounts necessary to sustain old and dilapidated properties, detached ownership, the lack of municipal attention to these sections which are usually without sufficient power, economic or political, to command improvements. These factors may be listed as common to such blighted areas:<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> In Cleveland, with 26 wards, there are, in a single ward, as many as 34.1 per cent of the Negroes, 22.6 per cent of the Italians and 21.5 per cent of the Poles. In Chicago, 43.5 per cent of the Negroes, 25.6 per cent of the Italians and 12.2 per cent of the Poles are found in a single ward.

<sup>4</sup> Johnson, Charles S., *The Negro in American Civilization*, New York, Henry Holt & Company, 1930. ("The Problem of Homes," pp. 206-207.)

1. The dwellings, being no longer desirable for residence, while the land is potentially valuable for business, are as a rule difficult to buy.
2. They are difficult to put or keep in repair.
3. The area attracts few new dwellings.
4. The dwellings are out-of-date and frequently fall within the class tolerated as "old law" houses, with few of the sanitary provisions required in new structures for the preservation of health.
5. The dwellings were erected for purposes and family habits different enough from the habits and necessities of the new Negro families to introduce difficulties. For example, the intimate arrangement of the early houses for private families is dangerously unsuitable for the new families which must take lodgers into their households. Privacy is destroyed and other social problems introduced.
6. Where this population is set off without influence there is a temptation for the city government to neglect it in matters of street cleaning, garbage disposal, paving and police protection. Interest and available funds center upon the improvements in new areas.

Although there is in the North a concentration of both immigrant and Negro populations in these blighted areas, the Negro concentration is invariably higher, ranging from 30 to 70 per cent. This factor, together with similar concentration in sections of the South in which there are few immigrants, gives to the Negro sections of cities an almost fixed association with blighted areas. At the same time the complication of social and racial factors makes it extremely difficult either to improve these areas or to escape from them completely.

### Patterns of Negro Segregation

Wherever there is a Negro population of any size, there will be found some degree of concentration. However, the patterns of separation vary among the cities, from widely scattered clusters to cities in which 90 per cent of the Negro population resides within the limits of a contiguous area. Woofter<sup>5</sup> describes several general patterns which are more or less familiar, and which represent approximately the dominant characteristics of the principal types.

"The first group is typified by New York and Chicago, where the concentration of Negroes is great and yet where it affects only a small part of the whole city area. In Chicago this pattern seems to be changing as the Negroes spread more southward. In New York, 96 per cent of the white

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<sup>5</sup> Woofter, T. J. Jr. and Associates, *Negro Problems in Cities*, Garden City, N. Y., Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1928, p. 38.

people are in concentrated white areas and 28 per cent of the colored people are in concentrated colored areas.

"The second group is typified by Richmond, and includes most of the large southern cities where Negroes are highly concentrated in several rather large parts of the city and lightly scattered in others, thus leaving a large proportion of the white people in areas from 10 to 90 per cent Negro. In Richmond 53 per cent of the white people are in concentrated white areas and 25 per cent of the Negroes in concentrated Negro areas.

"The third group is typified by Charleston, and is limited to the older southern cities and towns which have a heavy percentage of Negroes in their total population, and consequently a heavy scattering of Negroes throughout the city. In Charleston there are no enumeration districts that have a population less than 10 per cent colored, and none that has a population less than 10 per cent white, placing all members of both races in districts from 10 to 90 per cent colored.

"Group four is composed of cities with light colored infusion, where the diffusion of Negroes affects only a very small area of the city and is somewhat scattered within this area. In Gary, 89 per cent of the white people are in concentrated white areas and no Negro districts are more than 90 per cent Negro."

### Physical Condition of Dwellings Occupied by Negroes

The material for this section of the report has been drawn from studies made by agencies and institutions in various sections of the United States. These studies were made at different periods and from different angles, thus offering little that is exactly comparable. The circumstances under which the studies were made have, as a rule, been unusual. A sudden population congestion, an outburst of crime or sickness has frequently prompted an investigation of Negro housing. Moreover, these have not always been general studies. It is the pathology of housing that has come in most often for study; consequently much of the literature emphasizes this slant to the neglect, frequently, of such normal situations as may exist.

A few students have attempted to make a distinction between broad types of Negro dwellings. One of the most thorough of these studies was that made by the Chicago Commission on Race Relations in 1921.<sup>6</sup> Dwellings were classified according to types from "A," which was described as the best, to "D," described as the poorest. About 15 per cent of the Negroes were found to be living in types "A" and "B," while the remaining 85 per cent

<sup>6</sup> The Chicago Commission on Race Relations, *The Negro in Chicago*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1922.

lived in types "C" and "D." These latter dwellings were located in the areas of heaviest concentration, and were the familiar inherited properties in and near blighted areas. More than half of these dwellings in classes "C" and "D" lacked the necessary conveniences of adequate shelter.

The Woofter housing study observed in all cities some central district where the majority of Negroes lived, and that this district was marked by an extremely poor type of housing, municipal neglect, and a high population density. A table was prepared classifying more liberally the equipment and condition of the houses as A, B, C, and D. "A" class houses represented a good, small dwelling, adequate in size and equipment for the family occupying it; class "B" comprised houses lacking one major and two minor items; class "C" houses lacked two or more major or three minor items, and class "D" lacked five major items and might be regarded as virtually uninhabitable. His scale was applied to 12,123 families. Of the owners, 21.7 per cent were in class "A" and 2.2 in class "D." Of the renters 4.0 were in class "A" and 18.9 in class "D." The main point of consideration is the fact that in the normal distribution of Negro-occupied dwellings, the factor of pathology actually looms large, whether North or South is considered.

### Sectional Factors in Negro Housing

The differences in building costs between sections, in economic levels of the general populations, in municipal sanitary codes and public conveniences, in adoption of modern equipment into homes, naturally affect the Negro population. The basic social relationship of the Negroes to the general population seldom varies between sections, although there may appear significant variations in the proportion of Negro homes of approved standards. In appraising the physical features of Negro housing, it seems best to treat these factors sectionally.

**Negro Housing in Northern Cities.** The Negro population of the North in 1910 was 1,027,674. By 1920 it had increased to 1,472,309, an increase of 43.3 per cent; and by 1930 it had grown to 2,409,219, a further increase of 63.6. In actual figures the increase of the last decade was 936,910. In view of the fact that the rate of increase for the entire Negro population was 13.6 and that natural increase in the North has been considerably lower

than for the Negro population as a whole, it would appear that at least 800,000 of this number are migrants who came during the past ten years. The areas of Negro residence in the northern cities have shown a tendency toward concentration within fewer wards since 1880.<sup>7</sup> The location of these areas has seldom changed except by expansion, and expansion has been met with the dual resistance of natural boundaries and racial antipathy. Where these populations have been increased, there has been a lack of housing, with consequent congestions, unhealthful living conditions, and high rents.<sup>8</sup> For the new populations have moved into the Negro areas already established.

The industrial centers, which have attracted the largest numbers of Negroes during the past fifteen years, have made no adequate provision for Negro workers drawn to their plants in an emergency, and conditions have frequently become so acute as to draw the attention of the community, sometimes to study, most often, however, to condemn the undesirability of the accessions.

"Throughout the industrial centers of the North the majority of Negro homes are located in sections where transportation facilities are inadequate, or in areas where the expansion of business houses, railroads and factories has rendered the district undesirable for residential purposes, or else in old sections where the paving, lighting, street cleaning, and sanitary regulations are neglected."<sup>9</sup>

The specific process by which Negroes come into possession of these areas may be described as follows: The level of Negro income points him toward the sections of low-priced dwellings. Real estate operators and home building concerns or individuals find it impracticable to build new homes in deteriorated residence areas. From the new developments Negroes are almost universally debarred. The available houses, thus, are limited to these run-down areas which, as they become less and less desirable, command less and less rent and correspondingly lower elements of the white population. Few repairs are made, and eventually a point is reached at which it is more profitable to admit Negroes than to

<sup>7</sup> Hoffman, Frederick L., *Race Traits and Tendencies of the American Negro*, Publications of the American Economic Association, 1896, 1st Series, Vol. 11, Nos. 1-3.

<sup>8</sup> "The Negro in Industry," *Survey Report No. 5*, American Management Association, New York, 1923.

<sup>9</sup> Kennedy, Louise Venable, *The Negro Peasant Turns Cityward*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1930.

lower the rentals further.<sup>10</sup> Few new houses are built in the Negro areas.<sup>11</sup> The standards embodied in building ordinances and sanitary codes thus cannot apply to their dwellings. The chances for improvement are extremely rare. Property is difficult to buy because land takes on new valuation in areas potentially useful for business.

The forces determining location have at the same time determined association. It is not uncommon, therefore, that these Negro areas have been found in juxtaposition to the old red-light sections, to cheap boarding houses, and to the noise and grime of factories and railroad yards.

While it is true that these aspects are most acute in periods of sudden population expansion, the fixed conditions of Negro residence in the cities of the North and the experience of these cities over the past fifteen years lead to the conclusion that all that can be expected are further decline and deterioration in these areas until they are taken over by business and the Negro population pushed into another cycle of the same character.

**Congestion.** With but few exceptions among all of the cities studied, there is a chronic overcrowding in the Negro dwellings, when considered as a whole. Where residence areas spread slowly and few new houses are erected, increases in the population are accommodated by doubling up. The practice of taking in lodgers serves the double purpose of providing individuals and small families with a place to stay, in the absence of small apartments and hotels, and of providing essential assistance on the payment of rents. In New York City within a comparatively small area there were 3,314 lodgers in 2,326 apartments. This did not always include relatives living in these families. Over half of these apartments had between 5 and 10 persons.<sup>12</sup> Elizabeth Hughes found 40 per cent of the Negro and Mexican one-family households in

<sup>10</sup> Nearing, Scott, *Black America*, New York, Vanguard Press, 1929.

<sup>11</sup> Reid, Ira De A., *The Negro Population of Albany, N. Y.*, New York, National Urban League, 1928.

Hughes, Elizabeth A., *Living Conditions for Small-Wage Earners in Chicago*, Bureau of Social Surveys, Chicago Department of Public Welfare, 1925.

*The Negro in Detroit* (Section V, "Housing"), Prepared for the Mayor's Interracial Committee, Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research, Inc., 1926. (Mimeographed.)

<sup>12</sup> Reid, Ira De A., *Twenty-four Hundred Negro Families in Harlem*, New York, New York Urban League, 1927.

Chicago taking in lodgers,<sup>13</sup> and in Columbus, Ohio, in 1928 there was actual overcrowding in 54 per cent of the families.<sup>14</sup> In Detroit there was an average of 2.07 lodgers in the Negro households, and for those families with lodgers the numbers ranged from 1 to 27.

Housing authorities set as the ideal use of land, about 10 families to an acre in outlying sections, and approximately 20 families, or about 70 persons, in central sections. Negro blocks are constantly found to violate this standard, for reasons over which, it would seem, they have little control. Woofter<sup>15</sup> measured the population density per acre in a number of cities as compared with the population as a whole. Negro density was twice as great as the total in Chicago, two-and-a-half times as great in Buffalo, and nearly five times as great in Philadelphia. In New York City, where population density is in a measure compensated by high buildings, the total density for the city was 223, while the Negro density was 336 per acre, although Negroes have comparatively few apartments<sup>16</sup> high enough to require elevators.

The studies agree that the chief causes for this situation are scarcity of available houses for Negroes, and the high prices charged for such as could be rented or purchased.<sup>17</sup> It is to be expected that overcrowding will be most serious in high-rent cities. Both land and room crowding are in evidence. Old single houses are turned into double houses or crude apartments, as is quite common in Chicago and New York. With the tendency observed in cities recently to decrease sanitary inspection and rely upon complaints of tenants to bring bad conditions to light, there has been frequent relaxation of such requisites as a separate water supply and toilet for each family. These tenants are found to be most often ignorant of the method of making complaints, or fearful of dispossession if they make them.

<sup>13</sup> Hughes, Elizabeth A., *Living Conditions for Small-Wage Earners in Chicago*, Bureau of Social Surveys, Chicago Department of Public Welfare, 1925.

<sup>14</sup> Mark, Mary Louise, *Negroes in Columbus (Ohio)*, (Section on Housing Conditions) Department of Sociology, Ohio State University, Ohio State University Press, 1928.

<sup>15</sup> Woofter, T. J. Jr. and Associates, *Negro Problems in Cities*, Garden City, N. Y., Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1928.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Kennedy, Louise Venable, *The Negro Peasant Turns Cityward*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1930.

**State of Repair.** The general aspect of Negro housing changes between cities. There will be varying proportions of standard Negro houses scattered within and without the areas of concentration. But there is no escaping the general aspect of the bulk of this housing. In New York City, of a considerable group of houses studied, only about 22 per cent were classed as being in good condition.<sup>18</sup> The Mayor's Interracial Committee of Detroit in 1926 made an examination of 1,000 Negro dwellings and found, with respect to interior and exterior repair, about half of them able to meet moderate standards.<sup>19</sup> In Minneapolis, Harris<sup>20</sup> found about 9 per cent of the buildings in good condition. Reid observed the "scanty equipment and poor repair" of the average Negro dwelling in Albany, New York, in 1928.<sup>21</sup> Elizabeth Hughes noted that Negroes and Mexicans in Chicago, of small-income groups, occupied the worst dwellings of all low-income groups.<sup>22</sup> The feverish activity of cities, through their chambers of commerce and builders, rarely touches the problem of the small-wage earner, and, with a few outstanding exceptions, has never touched the Negroes at all.

Bernard J. Newman of the Philadelphia Housing Association points out that the problem of the housing of any immigrant people is always the housing that exists there at the time of their arrival.<sup>23</sup> In Pennsylvania there has been a housing shortage for small-wage earners of any color. This shortage prompts not only vicious rent profiteering, but unsanitary and congested occupancy. Racial altercations and antipathies, reacting upon special groups, force segregation. When there are few or no houses within their income level these new groups must, he maintains, then decide:

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<sup>18</sup> Reid, Ira De A., *Twenty-four Hundred Negro Families in Harlem*, New York, New York Urban League, 1927.

<sup>19</sup> *The Negro in Detroit* (Section V, "Housing"), Prepared for the Mayor's Interracial Committee, Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research, Inc., 1926. (Mimeographed.)

<sup>20</sup> Harris, Abram L., *The Negro Population in Minneapolis, A Study of Race Relations*, Minneapolis, Minneapolis Urban League, 1926.

<sup>21</sup> Reid, Ira De A., *The Negro Population of Albany, N. Y.*, New York, National Urban League, 1928.

<sup>22</sup> Hughes, Elizabeth A., *Living Conditions for Small-Wage Earners in Chicago*, Bureau of Social Surveys, Chicago Department of Public Welfare, 1925.

<sup>23</sup> Newman, Bernard J., *Housing of the City Negro*, Whittier Center, Philadelphia, 1915. Paper No. 2.



*Courtesy of Better Homes in America*

Practice house for home economics students at Hampton Institute, Hampton, Virginia, built by Negro boys of the Trade School of the Institute. Its purpose is to teach high standards of housing and home furnishing.



*Photograph by N. A. Berthol*

An example of the better type of apartment housing available for Negroes in Cincinnati. Braxton Campbell Court consists of sixteen four-room apartments which now rent at \$30.00 per month.

*Courtesy of Better Housing League*

An example of the unsanitary conditions under which large numbers of urban Negro families find it necessary to live. This photograph, taken in Cincinnati, shows a house situated under a railroad trestle. The stairs and porch are in bad repair, supported by posts. There is no water supply and water must be brought to the house from a neighboring house in cans drawn on carts as shown in the picture. On the other side of the fence is a stable with piles of manure and a pig pen. The woman shown in the picture makes her living by taking in washing.



1. To take a dwelling larger than their needs, at a higher rental than they can afford and eke out the difference by letting rooms to lodgers or by reducing their expenditures for other essentials; or
2. To take houses discarded as unfit by others and make the best of the hazards involved; or
3. To reduce their standard of living and occupy apartments too small to meet their needs; or
4. To give up housekeeping and go to boarding, to become lodgers themselves; or
5. To go into temporary camps.

One day's inspection of 63 houses in the Negro section uncovered 90 violations of the Housing Law. There were obstructed drainage, disrepair, accumulation of rubbish and filth, and other nuisances.

Such a situation, which is not uncommon in the cities of the North, seemed to demand a new and forceful constructive program. It demanded not only an adequate sanitary law but efficient inspection to uncover and correct abuses and, what is most important, the erection of more houses on a low-cost basis to rent to low-wage-earning groups.

The Urban Section of the Group on Physical Aspects of Negro Housing, of which George R. Arthur was chairman, calls attention to the substantially constructed areas of Negro residence, usually to be found along with the types of Negro housing which have been more generally described. Says this group:

"There are in each city of Negro habitation one or more sections of Negro residence which can be called permanent residence areas. They are located in the city's outskirts in the zone of workingmen's homes or in the better residential zone, made up chiefly by families of the middle class including professional groups. This area can be characterized as the area of attempted home ownership as over against an area chiefly composed of renters. Here is found a higher standard of living and a more vital community feeling than we find in the interstitial area. In the smaller cities we find bungalows, single dwellings, duplex and small apartments and in the larger cities we find rows of flats. These residential sections have some element of space; they average three to four rooms for each family and there is usually lawn space around the buildings which is not found in the blighted areas and not so frequently found in the interstitial area.

"In each survey made by the Urban League, there are listed one or more such residential sections. The conditions of these sections are varied, ranging from those outlying territories where Negroes are able to buy cheap land and build for themselves homes from whatever materials they can find, often a room or two at a time, to the modern complete apartment buildings

and bungalows to be found in such cities as St. Louis, New York and Chicago.

"The population movement into these residential areas is a smaller one in all cities, a further 'invasion' into formerly restricted areas. Old lines give way and gradual expansion of Negro residential sections takes place."

**Rentals.** Evidence is abundant that in virtually every city of the North, Negro tenants are required to pay not merely excessive rentals for the properties occupied, but a considerably higher amount than is paid by white families who preceded them, or who are living in similar properties. This is a result of the limitation of available dwellings for this element of the population. There is a serious enough problem for all low-wage-earning groups, but in the case of the Negroes there are restrictions within these limitations. In Chicago these rent increases for Negroes were found to range from 20 to 50 per cent.<sup>24</sup> Among low-income groups of Negroes, Mexicans, and foreign born, twice as many Negroes as all the others together were paying \$10 per month per room and over, and nearly three times as many Negroes as native whites were required to pay \$10 a month per room for the same types of buildings.<sup>25</sup> In New York City between 1919 and 1927 the Negro rentals through one area increased nearly 100 per cent (from \$21.66 to \$41.77) while average rentals increased during the same period only 10 per cent.<sup>26</sup> The Board of Health of Buffalo, after studying 1,463 Negro families in that city, concluded that "the rents in most cases are too high for the accommodations offered."<sup>27</sup> In the same tenements were white and Negro families living in similar apartments. These radical rental differences were noted:<sup>27</sup>

White families.....	\$ 7.00	\$50.00	\$26.00	\$50.00	\$20.00
Negro families .....	25.00	45.00	55.00	70.00	28.00

<sup>24</sup> Johnson, Charles S., *The Negro in American Civilization*, New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1930. ("The Problem of Homes," pp. 199-233.)

<sup>25</sup> Hughes, Elizabeth A., *Living Conditions for Small-Wage Earners in Chicago*, Bureau of Social Surveys, Chicago Department of Public Welfare, 1925.

<sup>26</sup> Reid, Ira De A., *Twenty-four Hundred Negro Families in Harlem*, New York, New York Urban League, 1927.

<sup>27</sup> Woofter, T. J. Jr. and Associates, *Negro Problems in Cities*, Garden City, N. Y., Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1928, p. 127.

Reid, again, in New York, was able to measure the rent increases which followed Negro occupancy in a changing zone:

Table I. Rental Increases Following Negro Occupancy,  
New York.

	<i>Previous Rental</i>	<i>Present Rental</i>	<i>Per Cent Increase</i>	<i>Year Raised</i>
THREE ROOM APARTMENTS	\$22	\$42	90	1926
	20	30	50	1926
	28	35	25	1925
FOUR ROOM APARTMENTS	27	32	19	1926
	39	44	13	1926
	21	30	43	1926
	30	46	53	1925
	35	47	34	1925
	23	33	43	1925
FIVE ROOM APARTMENTS	40	60	50	1926
	35	55	56	1925
	35	65	86	1925
	36	50	38	1925
	60	90	50	1925
SIX ROOM APARTMENTS	50	90	80	1925
	55	73	33	1926

Mr. Reid states further:

"It is estimated that the market rent is 30 per cent higher than the rent which is paid by the old tenants. For three-room apartments in New York the market rent for December, 1925, was \$30.55. Tenants who were in possession since 1919 were paying less than \$20. In comparing the mean average for three-room apartments in New York, we find that, based on the length of tenancy the Negro group continues to pay a much higher rent than any other racial group. Very few apartments are available for less than \$10 a room. . . . In the mean average rent for the more popular apartments (i. e. those of three, four and five rooms), it is found that the Negro pays on the average of \$8 more than the average for a New York three-room apartment, \$10 more for the four-room apartment and \$7 more for the five-room apartment."

Carey Batchelor of the United Neighborhood Houses studied

groups of low-income families in New York, selecting for the Negro families in the comparison a group in West Harlem. He found the typical rental for the entire city to be \$316 annually, and for Negroes \$480. The rent per room for the city was \$6.67 and for Negroes \$9.50.<sup>28</sup>

In one of the old areas of Chicago where Negroes have been living for many years and few improvements made, the rents, nevertheless, had doubled between 1911 and 1931, and in some instances reached the astonishing figure of 250 per cent.

The trend is consistent, whether in the matter of comparative rentals or comparative equipment for the same rental. The high rents for a group already handicapped in employment constitute a problem of considerable gravity. The situation has been significantly associated with the taking in of lodgers to help pay the rent. The prevailing custom of accepting lodgers is, in turn, given as an excuse for higher rentals. Whether a cause or result of high rents, these lodgers have brought with them a train of social problems ranging from physical congestion to the serious moral disturbance of family life itself.

It is practically impossible under the present conditions which control Negro housing to escape vicious exploitation. It is reported that Judge John R. Davies of the Municipal Court in Harlem, the Negro section of New York, said before the Mayor's Committee on Rent Profiteering, "It is common for colored tenants in Harlem to pay twice as much as white tenants for the same apartments," and Judge Panken, before whom many Negro tenants were brought, drew out the admission from one landlord that he was making \$10,000 a year on a \$30,000 investment.<sup>29</sup>

Summarizing its special inquiry into rentals, the Group on Social and Economic Factors in Negro Housing, of which T. Arnold Hill was chairman, had this to say:

"The students of Negro housing conditions, and indeed, of Negro urban problems in general, practically all agree that the Negro renter, at least in urban communities, pays more rent for what he gets than any other group

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<sup>28</sup> *What the Tenement Family Has and What It Pays for It*, New York, United Neighborhood Houses, 1928. Unpublished.

<sup>29</sup> See article by Lane, Winthrop D., in *The Survey*, New York, March 1, 1925, Vol. 53.

of renters. "The rent of Negro dwellings is a plain indication of the exploitation of Negro neighborhoods. *The rents are excessive*, whether they are measured by the kind of house and equipment, by the relation of rents paid by Negroes and those paid by white people for similar quarters, by the steady increase in rents, by the relation of rent to the value of property, or by the proportion which rent forms to the family budget".<sup>30</sup>

"The matter of rent is a serious problem, for shelter is one of the prime necessities of existence in our climate. For food and clothing and other necessities the Negro can shop in the open market and so is at no distinct or peculiar disadvantage. The same is not true for shelter, as has been intimated. Of course, exploitation in the matter of housing and high rent is not confined to the Negro; that is, the Negro is not the only sufferer,—but even when every part of the rent-paying population is suffering under unsatisfactory housing conditions, the Negro rent payer in the cities is likely to feel the most pressure.

"What are the factors which limit the bargaining power of the Negro renter more strictly than of other renters? The first, of course, is the tendency of the community to limit its Negro population to a more or less well defined area or areas of residence within itself. The second is the low economic status of the Negro population in general, with its attendant lack of capital. The first factor creates a condition, the second tends to foster it.

"The segregation of the Negro inhabitant of urban communities is a time-honored and well-nigh universal phenomenon of American society. From the slave quarters of the plantation to the typical 'Negro districts' of modern American cities is not a very long jump, in the minds of most people. It is not our purpose here to enter into a long discussion of segregation, but to show how segregation affects rentals.

"On the face of it, the limitation of the supply of a commodity tends to raise prices, the demand remaining the same. As we have said, lodging is not only a commodity, it is a necessity. Segregation limits the supply of houses. Meanwhile the demand may be increasing, as was the case during the recent movement of Negroes from rural to urban communities, a fact that has received a great deal of attention during the past twelve years. An increasing demand and a very inelastic supply were responsible for over-crowding and high rents generally in many industrial centers during the period 1916-1921, but the Negro demand was demonstrably increased at a much higher rate than the general demand, and it is an axiom growing out of residential segregation that the supply of Negro housing facilities is more inelastic than the general supply."

#### Physical Condition of Negro Housing in the South. There

<sup>30</sup> Headley, Madge, "Housing," (Woofter, T. J. Jr. and Associates, *Negro Problems in Cities*, Garden City, N. Y., Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1928), p. 121.

have been few studies of Negro housing in the South, but there has been an increasing awareness of the situation with regard to the housing of small-income groups. The available data do not, however, lend themselves to classification in a manner comparable with those of other sections. Between North and South are notable differences in wealth, architecture, accessibility of building materials, and in the rates and direction of urban expansion. The generalizations of this section of the report are taken from such studies as have been made, under responsible auspices, in Richmond, Virginia; Louisville, Kentucky; Washington, D. C.; Houston, Texas; and Nashville, Tennessee; and from interviews with social agencies and community leaders in a number of cities, among which were Chattanooga, New Orleans, Houston, and Louisville.

Substantially the same cycles of property use are found in southern as in northern cities, and the areas characterized by Negro residence have taken on a distinctive and sometimes violently descriptive nomenclature. In Chattanooga the Tannery flats, erected some forty years ago by northern business men, Possum Town, Darktown, Onion Bottom, Blue Goose Hollow, are definitely Negro quarters, although there are, of course, stretches of dwellings in other parts of the city of varying character. Some of these sites, as in the case of Bush Town,<sup>31</sup> had a quasi-philanthropic beginning.

In New Orleans, to use one of the large southern cities as an example, there are many distinct areas of Negro housing in the city. They range from the ancient Jackson Square double tenements originally built, it is said, to serve as barracks for Napoleon's soldiers, to the Negro homes in the neighborhood of Straight College, a Negro school, where good dwellings prevail. As in Charleston, the Negro population, which is a large domestic service group, lives near the white population throughout the city. Social workers, however, know the *Devil* apartments, the *Ark*, and *Silver City*, named for its brilliance of tin and bottles in the construction.

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<sup>31</sup> Named for a manufacturer who offered \$1,000 to each Negro church within a radius of one mile, in appreciation of the influence of these churches in promoting sobriety and good habits in his workers.

The city has a zoning ordinance which disturbs the normal trend of housing expansion without offering any satisfactory relief for the Negro families.

The absence of specific measurements of Negro housing in this area warrants general description of the areas of Negro residence, with the process by which they are constantly shifting, and this is given in some detail because it reflects characteristic trends in those sections where racial factors are of great importance and the economic ineffectiveness of the group is exaggerated by determined racial policies.

**Old Residence Areas Turned to Negro Use.<sup>32</sup>** "There is, first, a section which is part commercial and part residential, in which Negroes are found. The residence part formerly was occupied by aristocratic white persons. As it declined in desirability it became the red-light district. It is populated chiefly by West Indians who are either in business or have just come over. The superintendent of the public school system used to live in this area but the white residents began to move out and then the city built a garbage incinerator over here, and all of the best whites moved out and the Negroes moved in with the poor whites. There was a great deal of protest even from the white business men when they built the incinerator, but they paid no attention to it. Now about one-half of the population of this area consists of the laboring class."

**White Residents Move Out when Negroes Move in.<sup>33</sup>** "The railroad tracks cut through, and the railroad has bought up all of the homes near the track, apparently to keep better homes from being built which would cause a protest against the track running through. They rent these houses to Negroes, and they are badly kept up. The cemetery separates them from the restricted area. This red-light district was officially broken up during the war, but it still hangs on. The West Indians go into business there and live there, but they generally move out after they get a start. They go in there because of cheap rents and the business opportunities.

"The whites started leaving when the Negroes began to come in. Whenever a Negro would move next door, that was a signal for them to begin moving out. Then the school moved over here and that attracted more Negroes."

**Other Disagreeable Factors in Depreciated Properties Are Usually Overlooked.<sup>34</sup>** "The incinerator is just four blocks from the school and we get the odor over here when the wind is blowing this way. It is surrounded by some of the poorest Negro cabins. Even the Jung Hotel (one of the largest

<sup>32</sup> Cited by Mr. George Longe, Principal, Wicker Junior High School, New Orleans.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

in the city) and all of the Canal Street business men objected to the incinerator being put there.

"The prize-fight coliseum is near the incinerator too; the area further down near Jones School (Valena C. Jones, on North side near Claiborne) is called Monkey Land. Palliate Land is back town, and is named for the men who owned a large tract of land out there. It is bounded by the Bayou, St. John, Parias Avenue, the Southern Railroad and Hibernia Avenue. Dillard University has a new site in this section."

**Immigrant Areas.<sup>35</sup>** "About 20 blocks from this area we have a group consisting largely of Italians making and selling whiskey to Negroes. 'Razor Alley' is near the penitentiary. They called it by that name because there were so many fights over there. Then there are some sections named after certain churches. One is called Zion City after Zion Church."

**Algiers, a Negro Settlement.<sup>36</sup>** "There's a section called Algiers over near the river, and the 'Little Coast in Algiers' is a very interesting place; it is in the city limits and McDonough School No. 32 is on the upper side near the heart of the town. This school I am telling you about is further down on the lower coast. Out there, children have to leave school at certain times of the year to work in the gardens. In the whole community there are only three or four good houses. There are no streets, just lanes and gravel roads; the lanes have such names as Socks Lane, Lee's Lane, and so forth. People live in one- or two-room houses in rows. They keep rather dirty homes, but that cannot be helped because large families pile up in those two little rooms. There are very few who have three rooms. There is no sanitation; just old fashioned privies.

"There were blocks and blocks without light, and they have to go to the river and bail up water in buckets to use. During the summer the men invited in the Civic League from the city and drew up a petition for some lights and a better water supply. They were given immediate attention, and now they have a few lamp posts and are developing a better water supply."

**Alley Dwellers.<sup>37</sup>** "Housing conditions, especially in the section of the La Fon School, are very poor. There are some houses divided into twenty one-room apartments that have no lighting except from the alley. They are shut off from the front and side streets and are very dark. You find this type of flat all over the city. Most of the people use charcoal stoves for cooking and heating, and often holes are burnt in the floor from these, for they are sometimes merely buckets (galvanized) and some of the holes are big enough for a person to fall through. There is one toilet for each five families. All the houses have smoke flues. There is no gas connection. Some of the rooms are as cheap as \$1 or \$3 per week. They have no yards; just the alleyways, and no back yards either. It is a very public affair; most of them wash up out on the porch. Often a man comes out

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> Cited by Mrs. Maude R. Dedeaux, Principal of Lawton School in Algiers, New Orleans.

<sup>37</sup> Cited by Mrs. Irving Evans, Community Center, La Fon-Thomy School, New Orleans, in interview.

with his trousers and undershirt on and washes his body there. The women have to wash out there too. There is no room for privacy at all.

"It is very low, wet and damp in all the yards except in summer. Most of the gutters are open and all the waste water, and so forth, runs out and empties into them. They become filled with stagnant water and I have seen the children fishing out things and sailing boats in this stagnant water. They empty half of the swimming pool water into it, and there is no proper outlet for it. Most of the houses leak. The next grade of houses is double with light from only one side. Each family in this type of house has to burn lights in the morning and in the afternoon."

**The Creoles.**<sup>38</sup> "Down town from the railroad to Elysian Fields there are some more desirable houses. A good many Creoles live down there, and they mix freely with the whites and are able to get better homes than the Negroes, except the professional Negroes. The masses down town are, generally speaking, housed better than the masses up town. The down town section has suffered from lack of improved streets and water, but the city is now putting in streets and sewerage. There is not much interest in building and buying in the down town section. The land there is so low that the foundation has to be built up high to keep out the water. That is too expensive."

**Silver City.**<sup>39</sup> "In the Thalia-Washington Avenue section the houses are not old. It is practically a new section which was at one time a city dump. It is called Silver City. I don't know why they call it that unless it refers to the settlement's having been built on the top of tin cans. It is now built up and many own homes there, but there is a rough element, too."

**Changing Neighborhoods.**<sup>40</sup> "Louisiana Avenue at one time was all white. Now it is white from the river to Dryades and then colored for blocks and white again. The city never looks into predominantly colored as well as it does white sections, but we are so mixed up that they often have to do for both to do for whites. We have some terrible streets, but we have police protection, lights, sewerage, etc.

"There has been some pushing out of whites in the Magnolia Street section. For instance, about six or eight blocks that were entirely white are now all colored. There are frequently clashes with reference to Negroes moving into white communities, but there has been no organized movement since the Segregation Act. There was a feeling that the colored ought not to have come into this block but nothing organized was done. Occasionally we have cases where a colored person moves into a white section and is made to feel that he's not wanted, but there's not much fight in them (whites); usually they move out if they can't put you out, if the feeling is real strong.

"When I moved into my neighborhood most of the people there were

<sup>38</sup> Cited by the Reverend N. A. Holmes, 2307 Bienville, New Orleans, in interview.

<sup>39</sup> Cited by Mrs. W. O. Sazon, Standard Life Insurance Company, New Orleans, in interview.

<sup>40</sup> Cited by Mr. E. A. Perkins, Principal, Danneel School, and by Mrs. W. O. Sazon, Standard Life Insurance Company, New Orleans.

white; in fact my next door neighbor was white. That is on Jenner Street near Magnolia; a white hospital is out there. It has not been more than two years ago since the colored started in. The houses are not so old. I don't know why they just started moving out; I know it was not because of Negroes for there has been one colored family here ever since I can remember and that family had a two-story double house, with a white family living in one side. The white hospital is now surrounded on two sides by colored, but it takes only emergency colored cases."

There are more accurate studies of housing in certain other cities. The Social Science Department of Fisk University, for example, studied 1,000 Negro families in Nashville in 1929 and 1930. Every fifth Negro family in the city was taken in the effort to get a sample that was fairly representative of the whole. The prevailing structure was the one-story dwelling and about 60 per cent of the families lived in these. There was little congestion; most of the families had been in occupancy a short period. About half of the houses (529) had running water, and only 15 per cent had bathtubs. The toilet was outside for 73 per cent of the houses, and only 19 per cent had modern inside toilets. The rents were low as compared with northern cities. The median was \$15.51 per month. Congestion was not acute for the majority of the families, although by so broad a standard as two persons per sleeping room there was overcrowding in 23 per cent of the families. Rent increases had occurred during the year in 5 per cent of the cases.

The Civic Federation of Dallas, Texas, studied 1,245 Negro homes in 1924 and 1925 and found, by a rough classification of these dwellings, 15 per cent falling within a desirable class designated as "A," 33.8 per cent in a class described as "good but lacking in some particulars," 31 per cent "barely habitable," and 19.2 per cent "unfit for habitation." The classification, while not supported by exact physical measurements, provides a reasonably adequate index, at least to gross differences in the habitability of Negro homes. The study points out further that "less than 50 per cent of the houses now occupied by Negroes are reasonably fit for good family life, while 20 per cent of the houses ought actually to be destroyed."<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> *Survey of Negro Housing in Dallas, Texas*, The Dallas Committee on Interracial Cooperation, Civic Federation of Dallas, 1924-1925. (Manuscript.)

In Houston, Texas, Jesse O. Thomas<sup>42</sup> of the National Urban League observed the absence of drainage, lights, and paving in the Negro sections, along with the poorly constructed and dilapidated houses. This need was most conspicuous in the lower-wage-earning groups. The fact that there are types of homes of better grade in Houston as in other southern cities is obvious in the numbers of such dwellings owned in some other sections of the city.

Richmond, Virginia, has had the benefit of three studies of Negro housing within the past few years. The latest of these was a reflection of a growing civic interest in this aspect of local social problems, and had as its auspice the *Richmond News-Leader*.<sup>43</sup> Although in this study, made by a competent student of social science, the small-income groups were more generally covered than other scattered Negro individuals of larger means, practically the same processes of inheriting physical condition of the bulk of Negro dwellings are revealed. There was found an average of less than four rooms to each family, and an average age of these houses of 37.9 years. Four of each ten houses had leaking roofs, and three of each ten were in a state of advanced dilapidation. Leigh Street, which has long been the location of many of the refined homes of Negroes, is filled with large old brick houses originally owned by Richmond's white aristocracy many years before the Negroes took occupancy. In blocks of this street, as on some of the intersecting streets, there is a manifest effort to sustain the life of these dwellings of which they have acquired ownership, in the planting of gardens and shrubbery. There is at least one new residence section for Negroes in the vicinity of the Virginia Union University.

The general picture, however, which includes all sections, reveals that at least half of the dwellings are in various stages of dilapidation; that less than one of every eight houses has plumbing facilities inside the house; that but one in three has a water connection inside the house; and that 14 per cent have neither kitchen nor bathroom.

The study was able to check and corroborate an earlier study

<sup>42</sup> Thomas, Jesse O., *A Study of the Social Welfare Status of the Negroes in Houston, Texas*, New York, National Urban League, 1929.

<sup>43</sup> Corson, John J. III, "Negro Housing in Richmond," *Richmond News-Leader*, September 21 to October 1, 1931.

made by Charles L. Knight of the University of Virginia in 1927,<sup>44</sup> and another by the Richmond Council of Social Agencies.<sup>45</sup> The curious conclusion was reached by Mr. Corson, as a result of the findings of these studies, that the conditions observed were due to a relative decline in the Negro population since 1880. The ambitious Negro family, it was thought, moved away rather than face the handicap of uninhabitable and unattractive living surroundings and poor wages. Regarding municipal attention to Negro areas, the earlier report of the Richmond Council of Social Agencies is specific, both on the matter of the actual neglect and the attitude of the Negroes toward it.

"On the broad question of the general difficulties of Negro life in Richmond, as already suggested, 916 different families listed 1,630 difficulties. Ahead of everything else came the criticism of the houses they lived in and the condition of their streets. There was a total of 707 such criticisms. Three hundred and ninety-two, or over one-half, directed their criticisms to the condition of their streets and alleys. The language used varied, but it all meant the same thing: Richmond Negroes feel that the streets in their sections are 'dirty,' 'bad,' 'muddy,' 'unpaved,' 'dark,' 'poorly lighted.' The Knight study, page 53, previously referred to, says, 'In Fulton, especially, the condition of the streets is such as would not be tolerated in a white community.' The summary of the condition of streets in that district, compiled from block sheets made by the Survey field workers, reads: 'The streets of one-half of the blocks had never been paved. . . . Over one-third of the blocks surveyed are without sidewalks. In wet weather it was noted by the surveyors that mud makes some of the streets and sidewalks almost impassable. In some of the blocks, dirt paths run along paved or partially paved or oiled roads. A large portion of the district is without curbs or gutters.'"<sup>46</sup>

The southern city surveys offer an almost unvarying picture. In Knoxville,<sup>47</sup> Tennessee, 34 per cent of the Negro dwellings were without sewerage connections, and in Louisville,<sup>48</sup> Kentucky,

<sup>44</sup> Knight, Charles Louis, *Negro Housing in Certain Virginia Cities* (Richmond, Lynchburg and Charlottesville), (University of Virginia, Phelps-Stokes Fellowship Paper No. 8), Richmond, The William Byrd Press, 1927.

<sup>45</sup> "The Negro in Richmond, Virginia," *Report of the Negro Welfare Survey Committee*, Richmond Council of Social Agencies, 1929.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> Daves, J. H., *A Social Study of the Colored Population of Knoxville, Tennessee*, Knoxville, The Free Colored Library, 1926.

<sup>48</sup> Ragland, J. M., *A Study of 400 Negro Houses*, Louisville, Ky., Louisville Urban League, 1924.

about the same proportion of neglect was noted. Tulsa,<sup>49</sup> Oklahoma, has, perhaps, the highest concentration of Negro population of any city, North or South. About 98 per cent of its Negroes live in a single "black belt." In 1921 it was a scene of a disastrous race riot. The complete separation of the Negro area, unprotected by the dwellings of white residents, made it possible for a mob to destroy the entire section, comprising thirty city blocks, by fire. At present, numbers of Negroes live in the servant quarters of white residential sections. The rebuilt houses in the new Negro section represent a motley array of structures from improvised shelters to brick apartment houses and hotels. However, the city has not extended lighting to this area, nor any useful amount of its sanitary measures and utilities. Washington, D. C.,<sup>50</sup> may be considered virtually a southern city, although it is the National Capital. The original plan of the city provided for wide and deep building lots. As the population grew and land values increased, the front yards were used for solid rows of dwellings and the deep back yards for cheaper buildings facing the alleys. While they were new, they were called courts. Negro population increase suggested a use for these and they were extended throughout the city. "So closely have the terms *Alleys* and *Negroes* been associated," says the author of *The Housing of Negroes in Washington, D. C.*, "that in the minds of most of the older citizens they are inseparable." In 1908 the police department enumerated 261 alleys with a population of 14,237 Negroes and 1,614 white persons. They lived under the odium of such names as Tin Can Alley, Church Row, Coon Alley, Hog Alley, Moonshine Alley. The residents of *Goat Alley* made an appeal to the City Commissioners to have their homes designated by a more respectable name.<sup>51</sup> Besides the alleys are two types of homes: Those built for Negroes and those inherited in the customary manner from white persons. The first are poorly constructed and exorbitantly priced. Real estate men contend that for Negro buyers they must be so.

<sup>49</sup> *An Elementary Study of Negro Life in Tulsa, Oklahoma*, New York, National Urban League, 1927.

<sup>50</sup> Jones, William Henry, *The Housing of Negroes in Washington, D. C.*, Washington, Howard University Press, 1929.

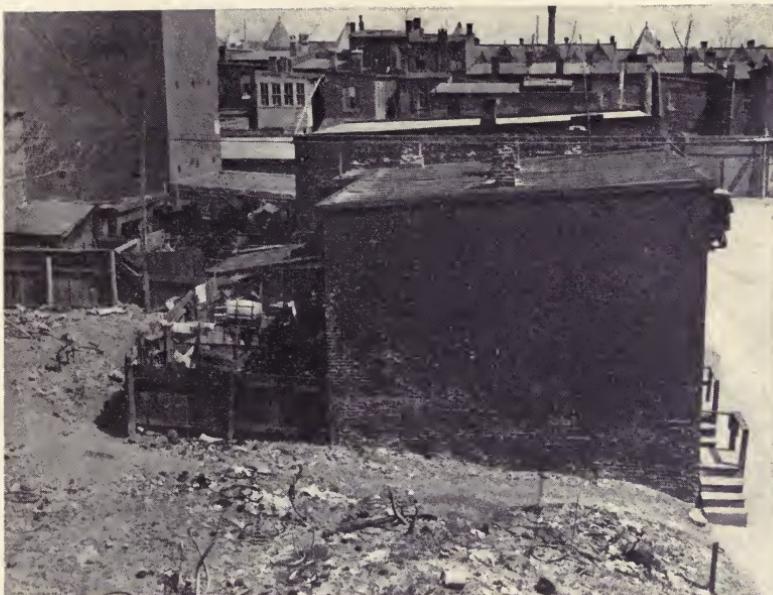
<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

### Summary of Studies of Physical Aspects of Negro Housing

**Urban Negro Housing.** Summarizing the physical features of urban Negro housing, North and South, these observations seem warranted:

1. The recent migration to cities has increased Negro populations more rapidly than the neighborhoods to which they have been restricted have expanded.
2. The areas which have become Negro areas are inevitably advanced in age and, for the most part, in various stages of dilapidation.
3. Congestion has followed, at first, as a phase of city growth and has continued as a phase of race relations.
4. This congestion, moreover, comes about largely from conditions over which Negroes have little control.<sup>52</sup>
5. The Negro population pays, on the average, a higher rental than white families of the same income level, for similar dwellings.
6. Adjustment to high rentals forces the taking in of lodgers to pay the rent, and these lodgers, in turn, become the excuse for further rent increases.
7. The greater the isolation of Negro sections, the greater the neglect of these areas by municipalities.
8. There have been few attempts to provide adequate new housing for this element of the population.
9. The squalor and dilapidation associated with Negro areas, while in a measure due to the habits of the occupants, are nevertheless encouraged by the conditions themselves.
10. There are few inspections of these areas and few corrective factors even where sanitary codes are in force.
11. The segregation of Negro areas is indiscriminate and forces Negroes of all tastes and economic ability into an association which is neither natural nor generally wholesome.
12. There are, despite the general condition, shades of difference in the condition of Negro-occupied properties, and significant differences between Negro residences in each locality, particularly when some of these dwellings are owned.
13. The degrees of housing pressure vary among the cities, as do the patterns of segregation, but the basic relationship of the Negroes to the population as a whole remains the same.
14. There is more congestion in the North than in the South, but the extent of tolerance of gross deficiencies in sanitation is greater in the South than in the North.
15. There appears at present no serious effort in either section to correct these conditions.
16. The housing need of Negroes, in its physical aspects, divides itself between:

<sup>52</sup> Woofter, T. J. Jr. and Associates, *Negro Problems in Cities*, Garden City, N. Y., Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1928.



*Courtesy of Housing Committee,  
Washington Council of Social Agencies*

*Photograph by Richard Carlyle Ball*

Unsanitary living conditions for Negroes in "Goat Alley," Washington, D. C. The insecure railings on the front stoops, the clutter and confusion of backyards and the unsightly filled land next to the houses should be noted, as well as the expanse of windowless wall.



*Courtesy of Housing Committee,  
Washington Council of Social Agencies*

*Photograph by Richard Carlyle Ball*

Fire risk, insanitation, poor repair, clutter and confusion are all illustrated in this photograph of Logan's Court, Washington, D. C.



*Courtesy of Bureau of Agricultural Engineering, United States Department of Agriculture*  
Rural housing at present available for Negro farmers of the South is seldom better and commonly not as good as that depicted above.

- (a) Requirement for adequate new low-priced dwellings for low-income groups of Negroes, and
- (b) Opportunities for Negroes of higher-income levels to secure or erect dwellings in more desirable sections of the city.

**Rural Negro Housing.** The majority of the Negro population is still a rural population, although the proportions are decreasing with recent changes in agriculture. This phase of housing for Negroes centers itself almost exclusively in the South. Exceedingly few studies are available in this field. A first generalization, however, is offered in the figures which distinguish classes of rural Negroes. In 1920, there were 6,661,132 Negroes<sup>53</sup> living in rural areas. The agricultural census of 1925 indicates that of 831,455 Negro farmers 23.4 per cent are owners and 76.5 tenants. Since it appears to be a rule that superior houses go with ownership, the major housing problem is that which has to do with the dwellings of the tenants.

The rates of ownership vary between sections, and there may be home ownership in rural sections, apart from farm ownership. Little attention has been given, in the past, to particular conditions of Negro rural dwellings. The condition has usually been below the standard scale employed in measuring housing adequacy, and there has been recourse simply to emotional expressions of one sort or the other, but usually bad. The income of the tenant farmer has been so extremely small and the profits of agriculture, generally, so meager, that little has been expected in the way of providing for tenants more than the familiar two- or three-room, unpainted, or white-washed cabin quarters with its characteristic "dog run," a sheltered porch dividing the house. Giles A. Hubert studied housing and ownership problems of Negro farmers in Okfuskee County, Oklahoma,<sup>54</sup> in 1931 and observed that both owner-operators and landlords have found it difficult to obtain funds to improve their houses in any permanent way. One description of rural housing of Negroes is offered in the study of the Children's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor, of children in cotton-growing areas of Texas.

"Among Negro families the three- or four-room house was most common. Practically all were one-story frame buildings, with no basement and no

<sup>53</sup> The 1930 figures were not available at the time of the preparation of this report.

<sup>54</sup> Hubert, Giles A., *A Short Study of Housing and Ownership Problems of Farmers in Boley Community, Okfuskee County, Oklahoma*, 1931.

foundation other than pillars or wooden blocks. Few houses had any modern conveniences. In Hill County most of these were heated by stoves, but in Rusk County 89 per cent of the white and 82 per cent of the Negro families depended upon a fireplace for heating. Among Negro families in Rusk County only 7 per cent, and only 2 per cent of the Negro families in Hill County, reported water in the house or on the porch. None of the Negro families in either county had a sink."

Woofter<sup>55</sup> studied Negro families on St. Helena Island, an old plantation community, in 1930, and of their housing he says:

"The majority of these first houses were one- or two-room cabins with stick and mud chimney. There was a scattering of larger houses embellished with bay windows and front porches. Under the constant pressure of Penn School for better homes the one-room houses have gradually disappeared and now only a few of this type are occupied by the older people.

"The next type was the two-room house with a 'jump-up'. The 'jump-up' corresponds, on a smaller scale, to the second story rooms placed under a bungalow roof . . . ."

"The average house is now 3.3 rooms . . . ."

" . . . About 20 per cent of the households average more than two people per room."

The Department of Social Science of Fisk University has conducted studies of the Negro population in two southern counties and one small town area in the South.<sup>56</sup> One of the rural studies was of a county in Tennessee, and the other of a county in Alabama. In the Tennessee county 56 per cent of the dwellings were over twenty years old, 75 per cent fell in the class of disrepair which included leaking roofs, broken windows, doors and steps. Half of these homes had open privies, and of the 748 dwellings only 12 had sanitary toilets and 158 had sanitary pits. The remainder had open privies, or no provision for disposal of waste at all.

In the Alabama county, half of the families lived in one- and two-room cabins, and 28 per cent in three-room cabins. Twenty-six per cent of the cabins were over thirty years old and 74 per cent over sixteen years old. There were few windows, only board blinds which were kept closed at night. Three hundred and ten had open privies and 296 had no provision for sewage disposal.

In Kingsport, Tennessee, a small town, there were 21 owners

<sup>55</sup> Woofter, T. J. Jr., *Black Yeomanry*, New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1930, p. 214.

<sup>56</sup> Johnson, Charles S., *Negro Rural Life Studies*, Department of Social Science, Fisk University, Nashville, Tenn.

among 133 Negro families. In the 133 dwellings there were 35 which could be considered in good repair.

In the southern cotton mill towns the Negro housing is usually an unkempt adjunct. Paul Blanshard<sup>57</sup> describes the general aspect of these sections in a brief reference:

"At the edge of many of the southern mill villages is 'nigger town,' a short stretch of road flanked by small, unpainted cottages which have the general appearance of being run down at the heels. Its houses are usually without lights and running water. . . ."

Some of the dwellings of rural Negro owners, of course, reach a high standard, and improvements are noted both in value and care of their homes. T. C. Walker<sup>58</sup> points to the increase in the amount of taxes paid by Negroes on personal property during a period of fifty years:

"Fifty years ago the Negroes of these (24) Tidewater counties owned but little personal property. Their furniture consisted of old chests, boxes, and roughly made bureaus, bedsteads and the like. Today such property as they then had, say, perhaps, one feather bed and two pillows usually held by each family, would not be assessed at any value. . . . By this report . . . (of the State Auditor) these 24 counties pay taxes on personal property valued at \$1,771,358."

Other individual instances of rural housing self-help are cited from *The Negro Year Book*:

" . . . W. R. Sarratt of Cherokee County, Georgia, owns 84 acres of land. His house, which cost him \$6,000, is equipped with a Delco lighting system. He paid \$40 per acre for his land. It was 'run down.' By taking care of his terraces, deep plowing and rotation of crops, he has brought it up to a high state of cultivation. He raises his own corn, wheat, oats and meat. He has bought no flour in four years and eats wheat bread all the time; he has bought no corn since before the World War. He keeps one cow, two mules, a Fordson and a Ford touring car . . ."<sup>59</sup>

"The flavor of romance is not lacking in the recent sale of the Old Phil Cook plantation, in Lee County, to a Negro who has been a tenant on its broad acres for 18 years.

"The plantation embraces 1,400 acres, and on it its owner, General Phil Cook, lived for many years. He represented the Third District in Congress, then became Georgia's Secretary of State, holding the latter office till his

<sup>57</sup> Blanshard, Paul, *Labor in Southern Cotton Mills*, New York, New Republic, Inc., 1927, p. 67.

<sup>58</sup> "Development in the Tidewater Counties of Virginia," *Annals of The American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 1913, Vol. 49, p. 138.

<sup>59</sup> Work, Monroe N., Editor, *The Negro Year Book*, Tuskegee, Ala., 1931, p. 120.

death. He was succeeded as Secretary of State by his son and namesake, who had been born on the Lee County plantation, and who in turn held the office in which his father had died till his own death some years ago.

"The Cook place was sold at auction for the purpose of effecting a division among the heirs. The sale attracted a large crowd, but the bidding was not spirited, owing to the fact that large plantations are not now much in demand. The Negro tenant to whom the place was knocked down obtained it for \$16,000. He is John Murphy, a practical and successful farmer who is highly thought of in his community."<sup>60</sup>

The Rural Section of the Group on Physical Aspects of Negro Housing under the chairmanship of Mrs. Florence C. Williams, in consideration of the paucity of actual studies of this situation in the important southern area, attempted to assemble general facts concerning trends in rural housing, through the medium of rural organizations, farm demonstrators and individuals in position to supply such data. It was understood that the conditions of such an inquiry, with respect to time and facilities, would preclude the use of methods yielding exact measurement, but these trends were regarded as important to know, in the absence of more detailed studies. Accordingly, in Florida, a cooperating group was organized under the chairmanship of Mrs. Ruth W. Atkinson, with Cyrus T. Greene of the Urban League as secretary. Working through the Florida Farmers' Cooperative Association, with headquarters at the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical College in Tallahassee, and assisted by the State Agricultural Extension Service and Vocational Educational Department, they approached local rural communities in the state.

According to this report:

"For the State of Florida the average size of family is 4.2. The number varies slightly in the case of certain counties, in some of which it may be more and in others less. The repair of tenant houses may or may not be kept up and in either case it may be done by the tenant or landlord and in some cases by both. For the most part tenant houses on farms in Florida are scattered. Less than 25 per cent were shown as grouped or quartered in the twenty counties given in this study.

"The water supply for tenants, in most cases, is more than one hundred feet away from the home. Very little attention is paid to the screening of windows in the state, but toilet facilities are provided for practically each home. Limited improvements in these particulars have been noticed.

"There is a division of opinion in the matter of segregation of Negro farmers. Depreciation in the values of property is seen as a handicap in

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<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

Table II. Showing Population and Home Ownership In  
Florida Counties  
(From Federal Census, 1930)

Name of County	Per Cent of Rural Negro Dwellers Who Own Homes	Value of Land and Buildings	Per Cent of Negro Population in County	Negroes in County According to 1930 Census
Alachua.....	25	\$843,483	44.6	15,313
Columbia.....	20	262,245	39.6	5,790
Escambia.....	5.5	74,810	26	13,924
Gadsden.....	15	468,380	56.8	16,976
Hamilton.....	9	122,970	40	3,779
Hillsboro.....	3	190,050	18.9	28,983
Jefferson.....	13	398,357	68	9,120
Jackson.....	21.4	772,764	39.3	12,551
Leon.....	15	454,270	58.7	13,788
Levy.....	11	109,981	38.2	7,561
Madison.....	7.5	223,440	52.5	8,203
Mation.....	27.5	749,565	49.1	14,513
Orange.....	1.5	372,395	24.6	12,226
Palm Beach.....	8	54,850	32.4	16,760
St. Johns.....	3	20,750	35.8	6,689
Seminole.....	5.5	115,600	45	8,431
Suwannee.....	13	80,420	30.2	3,215
Sumter.....	11	222,765	33.9	5,336
Washington.....	21	100,000	41.1	2,574
Walton.....	15.1	67,470	18.7	2,724

segregation; insurance protection is more difficult to secure; loan values on such property are practically nihil and the lack of good roads and facilities are major handicaps; but on the other hand, community groups are considered an advantage for educational and religious purposes.

"The purchase of Negro homes in rural communities is limited. The plan of the Simmons-Whittington bill introduced in the last Congress<sup>a</sup> is designed to finance the reclaiming of abandoned farms, and in the case of Florida, it would accelerate the present plans of agricultural extension work.

"The compulsory laws in the rural sections for screening windows should be resorted to after an intensive campaign of education regarding the matter of rural sanitation, which should be carried forward by rural, civic and welfare organizations. Such a procedure would greatly facilitate the understanding of these problems and Negro farms and homes could then be maintained at a higher assessed valuation and become more productive.

"In some cases Negroes who own farms and homes are assessed at a higher value of taxation than white citizens in the same community. Then, too, in other cases Negroes are automatically restricted from purchase by

<sup>a</sup> 71st Congress, 1st Session, H. R. 1677, S. 412.

requirements set by those in authority. Taxes are sometimes raised in order to discourage ownership in some localities on improved highways. A few cases of incendiarism have been noted and other illegal efforts have been made to prevent Negroes from improving rural homes.

"Of late years a one-crop system has been regarded as a curse to the Negro farmers and the boll weevil has been considered by some a 'godsend' in educating farmers to a point of better appreciation for diversified farming. This has made possible an increase in rural Negro home ownership as indicated by the tendency on the part of land owners to sell off small tracts of land to Negro purchasers."

The section attempted to secure certain general information through questionnaires distributed in ten southern states. These were directed to institutions, state and county officials, and a large list of white and Negro planters. Inasmuch as these questionnaires requested summary observations concerning certain local communities, the returns can be taken only as the impressions of persons regarded as well informed on local questions. According to the memorandum prepared on the basis of 308 returns, it appears that the structure of tenant homes is changing slowly from the well-known but archaic log cabin to small frame shelters, and that with the exception of South Carolina the tendency seems to be to scatter these tenant houses rather than group them, as formerly, in quarters. Water supply was extremely faulty in about half of these areas, and although some form of toilet is provided there were no cases which indicated an attempt to introduce improvements over the minimal fact of convenience. A large percentage of the tenants now raise gardens and chickens. The size of tenant dwellings was three to four rooms, while the size of family ranged around five. Newly built dwellings tended to be larger than the older dwellings.

Opinions of persons questioned on various phases of Negro housing were included in this memorandum:

"The ability of Negroes to finance the purchase of rural homes seems to vary somewhat in the different states and even in different parts of the same state. In Mississippi 70 per cent stated that Negroes can purchase rural homes on the same basis as whites, 30 per cent giving a negative reply. Arkansas landowners and a few tenants gave the same answer, as did 14 out of 25 Negro teachers in Virginia. The majority of the tenants in Arkansas and ten Negro teachers stated that they cannot. In North Carolina it is very generally stated that they can, while in Tennessee, Kentucky, and South Carolina they cannot. The obstacles given are the large initial payment, high interest rates, and indifference of bankers and loan

associations to Negro business. South Carolina replies that white business men and county officials find the Negro buyer a greater risk, particularly in the coast counties, and that he is not inclined to stick to his bargain. Racial prejudice was given as an obstacle to home ownership in a small percentage of the replies.

"Ninety per cent of the Kentucky replies stated that the rural Negro cannot obtain home insurance on the same basis as whites, the reasons given being that the property is not kept in repair, and that buildings are poorly constructed and generally a poor risk. In South Carolina the whites responding did not know and the Negroes nearly all answered 'no,' the reasons being very generally the same. Racial discrimination was given as the chief reason in Mississippi, the owners invariably answering 'no.' A majority of the white informants evaded the question. The situation seems better in Arkansas, Florida, Louisiana, Texas, Virginia, and North Carolina where 60 per cent replied that they can obtain home insurance on the same basis as whites as against 40 per cent in the negative, and in Tennessee 80 per cent gave a favorable reply."

**Summary of Physical Aspects of Negro Housing in the South.** The judgment of members of the Group on Physical Aspects of Negro Housing regarding the general features of this housing in the South is thus stated:

"In the study of the physical aspects of Negro housing in the South, it was found that Negro housing in general was inadequate. On the outskirts of many large cities, Negroes are found living generally in shanties built usually of wood, always unpainted, out of repair, squalid, lacking many modern conveniences and unsupplied with sewerage, running water, and indoor toilets. It was found that during the last fifteen years there has been a very marked movement of Negroes from rural to urban communities in the South. This movement has not been confined entirely to Negroes, however, and it is primarily a result of a combination of factors, first among which is a desire to leave the farm and a hope to earn a larger income. Other factors moving them cityward have been the better educational facilities for their children, better churches, a little better housing, and a better social grouping.

"The migrant Negroes found in the cities houses which were not much better than the ones from which they came. In most of the Negro districts in the cities these houses present a particularly ramshackle appearance. They are situated almost always along the railroad tracks or in swampy, isolated districts. The streets in the districts of this lower economic group are very seldom paved, nor are the roads kept in good condition. Most of the houses are dilapidated, with loose boards and sagging porches. Three- or four-room cottages of the 'shot-gun type' predominate. Sewerage, water, electric lights or gas are usually absent. Schools are always far away. The use of kerosene lamps in most of these homes prevails, and it is not uncommon to see a family of father, mother and two or three children gathered around a table upon which is a small kerosene lamp. With the aid of this dim glow the

parents are trying to read the newspapers and the children are trying to do their school work. These places are usually heated by open grates and the cooking is done on ranges or over oil stoves. Overcrowding always prevails.

"As the Negro moves up in the economic scale, he moves his family into the next higher residential area. This is generally an interstitial area where the homes are lighted with electricity or gas and heated by either coal stoves or by what are known as 'heatrolas.' The construction of the houses is usually of wood and brick and sometimes of stone. The walls of the rooms are usually painted and the ceilings calcined. Separate dining-rooms and separate kitchens also prevail. The professional type of Negro and others who have comparatively large incomes usually purchase property in out-lying districts of southern towns or in neighborhoods in the main occupied by white people. In many cases these homes are built for the Negro owners. They range from the small bungalow type of residence to the large house. In most cases they are heated by furnaces, always painted, and often surrounded by yards with shrubbery and flowers.

"In view of the terrible neglect shown by most southern cities with reference to Negro housing, especially in blighted areas, it was the conclusion of the committee that in all the cities of the South, the sections in which Negroes live in large numbers should be as desirably located with regard to topography as is the white area. The area should be provided with all the municipal improvements such as paving, water, sewerage, gas or electricity, fire and police protection. The greatest source for the development of these different types of service would be new building laws in most southern towns and the setting up of public machinery for city zoning. In addition to this, it is the committee's thought that public controls within the group itself should be established; namely, the organization of agencies which would create public opinion working toward the protection of the districts from immoral characters and inadequate housing. These agencies should also urge the proper conduct of municipal departments in the prompt removal and disposal of refuse, the condemnation and razing of buildings dangerous to life and limb, and efficient police and fire protection."

## CHAPTER II

### NEGRO HOUSING AND THE COMMUNITY

#### **Segregation Ordinances and Private Covenants**

One factor which may be regarded as the source of the special stress of Negro housing difficulties is racial segregation. It is, perhaps, natural that this policy should be set as an ideal policy of biracialism, as a result of the special circumstances of Negro history. In the United States the Negroes, in some measure, have adjusted themselves to it. They have set up their social institutions and foci of everyday interests in the areas to which they have found themselves restricted. It is inevitable, however, that abuses inherent in such an artificial alignment of society should follow, and that there should develop, within the Negro group, as a normal phase of its development, increasing numbers of families with the desire for something better.

The common belief seems to be that Negroes are a single, homogeneous group, adaptable alike to the same types of environment; that the deteriorated areas, inherited by the low-income groups of Negroes as a result of their poverty, are alone theirs by right of race; that they are "happier in their own neighborhoods," and for that reason require no interference; that any attempt on their part to escape this sordidness is prompted by a desire to live socially among white persons. Public opinion has been strong on this question for many years, and the degree of segregation which obtains at present is impressed by the force of tradition and of such economic necessities as have already been referred to. In northern centers economic factors have been strongest in effecting segregation; in southern sections racial factors have, perhaps, been strongest. The border states and cities, which have represented a mixture of attitudes and compulsions, have been most active in attempting to crystallize the ideal of complete separation in housing by legislation, as it has been crystallized throughout most of the South in transportation, in the schools, and in many other public relations.

The long, though ill-defined, policy of separation of the white and Negro residence districts in the cities of the country, North

and West as well as South, was first codified in a law in the fall of 1910, when the City of Baltimore, Maryland, took the initiative in devising special legislation to enforce separation.<sup>1</sup> This legislation, the so-called *West Segregation Ordinance*, followed popular agitation over the moving of a Negro family into a block which was at that time inhabited exclusively by white persons. The ordinance, very crudely drawn, was declared invalid in 1911, but another one was passed immediately. It also was declared unconstitutional. In 1913 a third ordinance was introduced, and the final decision in the Court of Appeals was withheld, pending a decision of the Supreme Court.<sup>2</sup> However, from the first suggestion of relief for this question through summary legislation there followed similar ordinances in Winston-Salem and Mooresville, North Carolina, in 1912, and, in 1913, ordinances in Madisonville, Kentucky; Birmingham, Alabama; Atlanta, Georgia; Richmond and Norfolk, Virginia; and in Asheville, North Carolina. In the following year a segregation ordinance was passed in Louisville, Kentucky. In 1916 St. Louis, Missouri, Dallas, Texas, and several other cities in Texas and Oklahoma passed ordinances aiming at the same result. These ordinances were upheld by the courts of the States of North Carolina, Georgia, and Missouri. Finally, the Louisville case reached the Supreme Court of the United States on November 5, 1917, and after two hearings it was unanimously declared unconstitutional.<sup>3</sup>

Although the Louisville decision temporarily checked the spread of these local ordinances, and prompted evasions of the unconstitutional features in private agreements between white landlords and real estate agents, several southern cities have attempted, by further changes in the legal wording of the bill, to secure a reversal of the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States. New Orleans passed a residential segregation ordinance in 1924; during the next two years other acts were passed by Indianapolis, Indiana, and Norfolk, Virginia. Both the Indianapolis and Norfolk acts were defeated in the lower courts, but the New Orleans law, after a defeat in the lower court, was carried to the State

<sup>1</sup> Stephenson, Gilbert T., "The Segregation of the White and Negro Races in Cities," *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, January, 1914, Vol. 13, pp. 1-18.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *The Crisis*, December, 1917, Vol. 15, p. 69.

Supreme Court by its white advocates, where they actually secured a reversal of the decision. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People carried the case again to the United States Supreme Court, and on the basis of the Louisville decision succeeded in having the New Orleans enactment declared unconstitutional. However, as late as February, 1930, a judge in the Superior Court in Los Angeles, California, handed down a decision restraining a Negro woman from occupying property which she held in a neighborhood in which no other Negroes resided, and from aiding or abetting other non-Caucasians in occupying these premises.<sup>4</sup> The history of these enactments provides an index to the strength of popular feeling regarding the complete segregation of Negro residence areas.

### Patterns of Legal Segregation Attempted

Judge Gilbert Stephenson, who is responsible for the first important study of race distinctions in American law,<sup>5</sup> has defined four types of segregation ordinances. The first type he calls the *Baltimore type*, which was copied by Greenville, South Carolina, and Atlanta, Georgia. Its chief characteristic was that it applied only to all-white and all-Negro blocks and did not undertake to legislate for blocks upon which both white people and Negroes lived. The second type of ordinance is illustrated by the *Virginia law*. Under this statute any city or town so desiring might divide its territory into "segregation districts"; designate which districts are to be for white people and which for Negroes, and make it unlawful for white people to live in Negro districts and for Negroes to live in white districts. Roanoke, Virginia, took advantage of this law and divided its territory into segregation districts. Portsmouth, Virginia, followed. Previously, all legislation had been limited to municipal ordinances until Virginia actually passed a state segregation law. A similar bill was introduced into the General Assembly of North Carolina, but failed. A third type of segregation legislation was first adopted as a local ordinance by Richmond, Virginia. It was copied by Ashland,

<sup>4</sup> See *The Defender*, February 8, 1930, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Stephenson, Gilbert T., *Race Distinctions in American Law*, New York, D. Appleton and Company, 1910.

Virginia, and Winston-Salem, North Carolina. This type of ordinance undertook to legislate for the whole city, declaring a block white whereon a majority of the residents were white, and colored whereon a majority of the people were colored.

The preamble to the Richmond ordinance includes many of the rationalizations of the policy, which are not often articulated, and very definitely suggests the influence of the temporary hysteria over racial intermixture, which has never appeared to be related to residence sites. Further, it sought to give to the ordinance both the legal aspect and nondiscrimination and the emotional weight of an earlier enactment. Its application was referred to those forbidden to intermarry. The ordinance was clothed in expressions of solicitude for the public welfare.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND:

1. That in order to preserve the general welfare, peace, racial integrity, morals, and social good order of the city of Richmond, it shall be unlawful for any person to use as a residence any building on any street between intersecting streets, where the majority of residences on such streets are occupied by those with whom said person is forbidden to intermarry by section 5 of the Act of the General Assembly of Virginia entitled: "An Act to Preserve Racial Integrity," and approved March 20, 1924, or as the same may be hereafter amended; provided, that nothing in this ordinance shall affect the right, existing at the time of the passage of this ordinance in any person, to use any such building as a residence.

2. Any person violating the provisions of this ordinance shall be liable to a fine of not less than one hundred dollars nor more than five hundred dollars, recoverable before the police justices of the city of Richmond as the case may be, each day's violation to constitute a separate offense.

3. That all ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with the ordinance be and the same are hereby repealed.

4. This ordinance shall be in force from its passage.<sup>8</sup>

The ordinance did not apply to white business enterprises operating within Negro neighborhoods.

The fourth type was the *Norfolk type*, which was more general in its application than any of the others. It applied to mixed as well as all-white and all-Negro blocks, and determined the color of the block by the ownership as well as by the occupancy of the property.

The urge to legislation was extended from cities to rural sec-

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<sup>8</sup> See *The Crisis*, April, 1929, Vol. 36, No. 4.

tions. Mr. Clarence Poe of North Carolina (editor of the *Progressive Farmer*) sponsored the proposal:

"That wherever the greater part of the land acreage in any given district that may be laid off is owned by one race a majority of the voters in such a district should have the right to say, if they wish, that in future no land shall be sold to a person of a different race—provided such action is approved or allowed (as being justified by considerations of the peace, protection and social life of the community) by a reviewing judge or board of county commissioners."<sup>7</sup>

Practically all of the ordinances attempted to avoid illegal specification of a discriminatory racial factor by making the statute apply to white and black alike, and by insisting that the purpose was to bring about better relations between the races and keep down disturbances. The purposes of the Baltimore, Atlanta, and Greenville ordinances were stated as a desire to preserve peace, prevent conflict and ill-feeling between races, and to promote the general welfare of the city. The preamble to the Virginia statute read:

"Whereas the preservation of the public morals, public health and public order in the cities and towns of this Commonwealth is endangered by the residence of white and colored people in close proximity to one another, . . ."<sup>8</sup>

All of these attempted ordinances have occurred in southern states and states bordering on the South, including California in the far West.

The Louisville ordinance was the first, after several years of legal segregation, to reach the Supreme Court of the United States.<sup>9</sup> Like most of the other ordinances it had been designed "to prevent conflict and ill-feeling between the white and colored races in the City of Louisville, and to preserve the public peace and promote the general welfare," . . . etc. The Court held that it was invalid because it ran counter to the provision of the 14th amendment that "*no state shall make or enforce any laws which may abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States.*" It held further that the City of Louisville violated the provision that no state shall "deprive any person of life, liberty, or

<sup>7</sup> Poe, Clarence, "Rural Land Segregation Between Whites and Negroes: A Reply to Mr. Stephenson," *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, July, 1914, pp. 207-212.

<sup>8</sup> Stephenson, Gilbert T., "The Segregation of the White and Negro Races in Cities," *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, January, 1914, Vol. 13, pp. 1-18.

<sup>9</sup> Buchanan v. Warley, 245 U. S. 60.

property without due process of law, or deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws." "Property," the Court held, "is more than the mere thing which a person owns; it is elementary that it includes the right to acquire, use, and dispose of it." Moreover, it could not be defended on the grounds of the "police power" of the state, for the police power "cannot justify the passage of a law or ordinance which runs counter to the limitations of the Federal Constitution." On the matter of promoting public peace by preventing race conflicts, the Court decreed that "desirable as this is, and important as is the preservation of public peace, this aim cannot be accomplished by laws or ordinances which deny rights created or protected by the Federal Constitution."

One point of view as expressed in the press, following this decision, accepted the decision as a means of preventing new "ghettos" and "slums," while another wing of opinion observed, still hopefully, that "what the city cannot do by formal enactment it may be able to accomplish justly and fairly by other means."

The failure of these attempts, thus far, to fix the residence boundaries of Negroes by law has, no doubt, been due more to the inescapable wording of the Constitution than to the choice of an active element of the white population. This is nowhere more evident than in the continued efforts to accomplish this segregation under various arrangements which evade the safeguards of the Constitution.<sup>10</sup>

#### Restrictive Compacts and Covenants

What custom accomplishes by way of controlling racial residence sites in many cities of the South, and the segregation ordinances sought to do for the border states, the practice of entering into covenants to exclude Negroes from certain areas accomplishes in areas of the North. For, whereas it is now uncon-

<sup>10</sup> It should be pointed out that on the matter of domiciliary segregation there is not the unanimous approval even of the southern white people. The wealthier classes, for example, view these laws with less concern. The "evils" are of greatest concern to such white persons as reside within certain local bounds. Usually the ordinances are pushed most earnestly by white householders and speculators who, either for social or pecuniary reasons, or both, object to Negro proximity. The wealthier white householders, by virtue of their superior economic ability, reside beyond the pale of encroachment of either undesirable Negroes or undesirable whites. They are most likely to prefer to have their Negro servants live near by, and in so doing they do not run the risk of presenting a similar social level.

stitutional to legislate against one element of citizens, the law permits individuals to enter contractual relationships and offers machinery for punishing violators of contracts. Thus, these covenants have become widespread through the North, and these exclusion methods have been reinforced by violence in Chicago, Detroit, White Plains, New York, Washington, and Philadelphia.

The first challenge of the covenants came in 1923, in the Washington, D. C., case of *Corrigan v. Buckley*, 299 Fed. 899. There had been a covenant, to which Mrs. Irene Hand Corrigan was a party, that the property would never be rented, leased, sold, or otherwise transferred to a Negro or to persons of African descent. The court ruled in 1924 that the covenant was valid and did not invade the constitutional rights of Negroes, inasmuch as Negroes had the right to enter into agreements to keep white persons or other persons deemed undesirable out of Negro neighborhoods.

In 1926, while the suit was still pending, an injunction was granted restraining the sale of other property affected by the restrictive covenants. Meanwhile, another type of covenant appeared in the case of a parcel of property in Randolph Place, in Washington, owned by Mrs. Minnie E. Torrey, a white woman, and sold to Mr. Sereno S. Ivy, a Negro. The deed to the property contained the following clause:

"Subject to the covenant that said lots shall never be rented, leased, sold, transferred, or conveyed unto any Negro or colored person under a penalty of two thousand dollars which shall be a lien against such lot."

The Supreme Court of the District of Columbia in 1925 held the covenant valid, and the case was appealed.<sup>11</sup> In 1927 another suit was filed to have Negroes vacate premises and abide by the conditions of a local restrictive covenant. Five suits, thus, were pending simultaneously in Washington, and in seventeen other cities in other sections of the country there was similar agitation over Negro segregation.

Attacks on these covenants have rested upon the contention that such covenants are in restraint of alienation, in restraint of trade, and against the public policy of the United States. The United States Supreme Court, declaring that it had no jurisdiction, refused to review the two cases brought to it, which questioned the constitutionality of residential segregation agreements of property

<sup>11</sup> On Appeal, *Torrey v. Wolfes*, 6 Fed. (2d) 702.

owners held legal by the Court of Appeals of the District of Columbia.<sup>12</sup>

That this decision was taken as a new method of private social zoning is evident in the editorial comment of the *Trenton Times*, in calling attention to the decision and to the already effective means employed by a local group of property owners to keep all kinds of shops out of their neighborhood, when it said: "In newer sections there is opportunity for real estate developers to fix by deed the character of their neighborhoods not only as to the exclusion of stores, garages, etc., but ruling as to the types of citizens who may be admitted, as well." Thus, it seems that what is unconstitutional and bad policy for a state or municipality is possible and legal by private agreement. This privilege, as exercised in the covenants, freely employed with respect to Negroes, has extended itself in various communities to include Jews, Indians, Japanese, "members of the Balkan races" (*sic*) and "South Europeans."

#### Some Social Effects of Formal Efforts at Segregation

Contrary to the professed intentions of these measures, in the cities where segregation laws have been attempted, the efforts as a rule have been accompanied by an intensified race friction. In Baltimore, Louisville, and New Orleans, notably, the attempts to arouse popular interest to the point of legislation involved campaigns of vilification and emotional appeals which had little or no reference to the simple fact of housing. In Louisville, the racial feeling stimulated by the fight continued active for more than ten years. Not only did it aggravate race friction within and without the racial groups, but it stirred a type of "race solidarity" incompatible with the most wholesome race relations. Bitterness remained on both sides; the white residents were balked by the Supreme Court; the Negroes were resentful of the disrespect of their own local government for their rights as citizens.

In New Orleans there was organized the *Louisiana Club for Segregation*, which circulated such propaganda:

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<sup>12</sup> See Work, Monroe N., Editor, *The Negro Year Book*, Tuskegee, Ala., 1931-1932; *Reports of National Association for the Advancement of Colored People*, 69 Fifth Ave., New York; *Opportunity*, New York, August, 1926, Vol. 4; *Literary Digest*, New York, June 12, 1926, Vol. 89; *The Crisis*, New York, December, 1924, Vol. 29, No. 2; *Congressional Digest*, Washington, June, 1926, Vol. 5, p. 207.

"Negroes have organized themselves . . . and are vigorously working night and day to gain social equality. Through their efforts they have overthrown segregation laws for Louisiana, Kentucky, Georgia, and Virginia. They want to be your next-door neighbor. They demand social equality. . . ."

A handbill told how much was being paid by the Federal Government in salaries to Negro employees, how many millions of dollars were being spent "to overcome the illiteracy test (applied to Negro prospective voters) to qualify him to vote," and asked what the whites were doing to "protect themselves."<sup>13</sup>

White residents in affected cities, who had lived near Negroes, and at times in adjoining houses to Negroes throughout their lives, became suddenly self-conscious. Many of them moved in panic because they could not resist the taunts of other white persons.

The unwholesome stress of these ordinances is apparent in the immediate decline in prices of properties available to Negroes when the ban was removed in Louisville, Baltimore, Atlanta, and New Orleans. The better houses and neighborhoods into which the Negroes moved in these cities constituted an improvement over their previous housing condition, in spite of the fact that financially, even in the subdivisions, they have been bought at a relatively high cost.

The covenants have already demonstrated some of the economic dangers of fixed domiciliary segregation. The covenanters in the Grand Boulevard district in Chicago who, in 1917, agreed not to sell 60 pieces of property to Negroes, went to the court in 1928 seeking to annul the agreement in order that they might clear their titles and sell to Negroes. And in Washington, D. C., before one case, involving a covenant, could be settled in court, all but two or three of the covenanters had yielded to the temptation to sell to Negroes. In numbers of cases the covenants have defeated their own purpose and have worked a hardship upon the covenanters as well as their heirs. When there is danger of Negro residence in a block formerly occupied exclusively by whites, something usually has already occurred, in the character of the block, to make it available to Negroes at a price which they can pay. It is not always possible to secure the signatures of all white residents in the area, and for the greater profit in selling to Ne-

<sup>13</sup> Perkins, A. E., Editor, *Who's Who in Colored Louisiana*, 1930.

goes the purpose of the covenant can be violated without involving legal penalty. Neighborhoods change, and the heirs find themselves with properties no longer valuable for residence and not yet valuable for business; and even though all of them should desert the properties, the sites could never be available for Negro residences, old or new, whether beside other groups or by themselves. The real opposition to good public policy is apparent when the privilege and custom are conceived as applicable over a wide area. It would mean that one minority element of the population is forever prohibited from living within covenanted territory, whatever character this should take in future. The corollary of such an arrangement is an intensified ghetto, the character of which, similarly, could never change.

#### Arguments Advanced in Support of Segregation

The most direct and usually the most effective argument in support of segregation is that Negroes depreciate property values. Another frequent argument is that a Negro in a white neighborhood is a disturbing factor and causes breaches of the public peace and race friction. Still another argument is that Negroes are happier in their own neighborhoods, where they have their churches, business, and other social institutions. Louis B. Wehle, in discussing the Louisville case, provides a summary of the most common reasons advanced:<sup>14</sup>

"At the trial involving the Louisville ordinance, counsel for the city, with a view to establishing that it was a reasonable exercise of the legislative police power, introduced evidence that the advent of colored residents in white neighborhoods inevitably causes friction, which in some instances has resulted in the enforced withdrawal of the Negro family through personal threats or wilful destruction of property. Highly reputable evidence was introduced to the effect that the arrival of a Negro family in a white residence block immediately cuts down actual real estate values in such block by from 30 to 60 per cent, . . . Many southerners who have a genuine desire to help the Negro contend that his immediate need in cities is to escape those frictions which throw him backward and interfere with affirmative remedial forces for his improvement; that the Negro in southern cities has recognized this need by voluntary segregation, but that individuals growing in numbers have been led to disregard the present futility and danger of social pressure; and that the segregation law is the necessary counter-move of the white

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<sup>14</sup> Wehle, Louis B., "Isolating the Negro," *The New Republic*, November 27, 1915, Vol. 5, pp. 88-89.

man for preserving peace while he waits to see whether or not the Negro may develop in ways which will justify his being given a greater measure of political and social freedom. . . .

"The southerner who argues for city segregation believes that it will provide the medium in which the character of the Negro will develop. . . ."

### Arguments Against Segregation

The principal argument against segregation is that it is unconstitutional. Moreover, it is the most fruitful source of ghettos, deliberately shutting off Negroes, and at times other national or racial groups, in the lowest and worst parts of the city and forcing them into a helpless association with vice, crime, and inescapable unattractiveness and insanitation. Such unfriendly isolation fosters prejudices which carry over into economic and other social relations. It is especially disastrous to the morale of the Negro, restricting his hopes for improvement as it restricts his general development.

Booker T. Washington, who was not regarded as radical in his views on race relations, summarized before his death the arguments against segregation, and these still remain unaffected by the further discussions of the question:<sup>15</sup>

1. It is unjust.
2. It invites other unjust measures.
3. It will not be productive of good, because practically every thoughtful Negro resents its injustice and doubts its sincerity. Any race adjustment based on injustice finally defeats itself. The Civil War is the best illustration of what results where it is attempted to make wrong right or seem to be right.
4. It is unnecessary.
5. It is inconsistent. The Negro is segregated from his white neighbor, but white business men are not prevented from doing business in Negro neighborhoods.
6. There has been no case of segregation of Negroes in the United States that has not widened the breach between the two races. Wherever a form of segregation exists it will be found that it has been administered in such a way as to embitter the Negro and harm more or less the moral fiber of the white man. That the Negro does not express his constant sense of wrong is no proof that he does not feel it.

Most important, from the point of view of this memorandum, is the fact that segregation, in being looked upon as a simple pana-

<sup>15</sup> Washington, Booker T., "My Views of Segregation Laws," *The New Republic*, New York, December 4, 1915, Vol. 5, p. 114.

cea, has kept the Negro-occupied sections of cities throughout the country fatally unwholesome places, a menace to the health, morals, and general decency of cities, and "plague spots for race exploitation, friction and riots."

### Violence and Intimidation

Negro housing segregation has been enforced by economic necessity, by law, contract, gentlemen's agreements, and by brute force. Where laws and private contracts have failed, mobs have attempted to maintain the racial integrity of neighborhoods. In Chicago, following the protests and agitation of the Hyde Park Property Owners' Association, the homes of 58 Negro families were bombed within a period of less than four years.<sup>16</sup> Bombings continued after that period, and were later used in other contested local situations. In Cleveland, Ohio, in 1924, Negro families were forced to abandon their homes in Garfield Heights because "they had no right to buy such a nice place."<sup>17</sup>

In Cleveland Heights during the same year handbills were distributed carrying this message:

"Be Sure to Read This.  
Certain niggers have recently blackmailed  
certain residents of the Cleveland  
Heights and other Sections of the City.  
They are now trying to erect a house at  
11114 Wade Park Avenue to Blackmail us.  
But they will not. The residents of the  
Neighborhood will not give one cent to those blackmailers.  
Appoint your committees to oppose and eradicate this  
group of Black Gold Diggers. Let them know we can dup-  
licate riots in Tulsa, St. Louis, Chicago, and  
Baltimore."

Shortly afterwards the home of a Negro physician who belonged to the City Club of Cleveland and was a member of the staff of a general hospital was twice dynamited in the Wade Park section of the city.<sup>18</sup>

In Pittsburgh, a wooden cross was burned on the lawn of a

<sup>16</sup> The Chicago Commission on Race Relations, *The Negro in Chicago*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1922, p. 122.

<sup>17</sup> *The Crisis*, November, 1924, Vol. 29, No. 1, p. 20.

<sup>18</sup> *The Crisis*, February, 1929, Vol. 36, No. 2.

Negro physician's home, and threats were made to withdraw financial support from the Community Chest and Y. M. C. A. if two Negro physicians and a Y. M. C. A. secretary were not forced by these organizations to move from recently purchased homes. Later, a mob of 3,000 white persons attacked the recently built home of a Negro post-office employee. In White Plains, New York, a cross was burned on the lawn and an attempt made to wreck the home of a Negro woman.<sup>19</sup>

There have been bombings of Negro houses in Kansas City, Louisville, Baltimore, and clashes in practically every state experiencing a Negro population increase, from Virginia to California. Shots were fired into the home of a Negro family in Memphis, Tennessee, located in an "exclusive section" in 1929; death threats were sent and finally the house was burned down.<sup>20</sup> The home of a Negro insurance auditor in Denver was demolished in 1926. Fifty masked men attempted to frighten a Negro woman from her home in Union, New Jersey, by throwing crude bombs and burning a fiery cross.

The most notable as well as most significant case illustrating these methods of intimidation was that which occurred in Detroit in 1925. The Negro population of that city had grown from 5,741 in 1910 to 40,838 in 1920 and to 81,831 in 1925. There had also been a large increase in the white population. The old Negro areas were overrun, and Negroes who were able to purchase property elsewhere attempted to move into less crowded territory. Where there are houses in a city outside the restricted Negro areas, it is expected that these will be occupied by white people. One physician had moved into a street occupied by whites. When his home was stoned and his family otherwise endangered, he moved. Five years later another Negro physician attempted to move into a similarly restricted street. A mob surrounded his home, and when they attacked it the Negro fired, killing one man and wounding another. The case went to court, attracting much attention, and after several months, with the help of able attorneys, he was released. The mob did not know that the former occupant of the house for many years had been a Negro of light complexion, who had simply been considered white.

<sup>19</sup> *The Defender*, April 25, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>20</sup> Work, Monroe N., Editor, *The Negro Year Book*, Tuskegee, Ala., 1931.

### How New Sites Are Acquired

The process of acquiring new sites under the present restrictions is tedious, hazardous, and frequently humiliating to the Negroes. This process, which varies but little from city to city, is described by Jones:

"The process is usually begun by individual Negroes—residential pioneers—establishing, or attempting to establish residence in the heart of an 'exclusively white' neighborhood. There are usually certain white home owners in every white section of the city who do not care to retain their property at a loss when they cannot secure a good white buyer and when Negroes are willing to offer them their price. Many such home owners now live outside the city and, hence, have no interest in the efforts to keep such communities 'white.' In certain other instances, Negroes who can pass for white have subtly purchased homes in the midst of white neighborhoods and have moved in before it became known that they were Negroes. Then there is the unmarried or widowed white woman who owns property in her own name and is out of sympathy with the general tendency to exclude the Negro. She, in many instances, defies the prejudice of the members of her community and sells her home to some particular colored family. Then, again, shrewd white real estate dealers have purposely sold to Negroes homes which were on 'exclusive white' streets in order to float new real estate projects."<sup>21</sup>

### Property Depreciation and Negro Residence

Most of the discussion of Negro areas centers about the question of property depreciation. It is currently assumed that the presence of Negroes depreciates property values. This belief is given point by the fact that real estate agents, brokers for loans, and investors in real estate generally regard Negro property a bad risk. When Negroes move into a block, there frequently follows a rapid exodus of white residents who put up their property for forced sale and accept the loss as inevitable. It was claimed, for example, that the "invasion" of Negroes in the Hyde Park area of Chicago resulted in a loss of \$200,000,000 to the white property owners. The physical aspect of old Negro areas is usually sufficient to constitute a threat to newer sections. It appears to be true that there have been properties which fell off in value when Negroes took occupancy; and this, because of the types of Negroes inhabiting the property. Two facts, however, are outstanding in the instances of property depreciation observed:

<sup>21</sup> Jones, William Henry, *The Housing of Negroes in Washington, D. C.*, Washington, Howard University Press, 1929, pp. 65-66.

1. That Negroes have been the *symptom* more often than the *cause* of depreciation.

2. The psychological factor involving opinions regarding desirability, precipitous flight, etc., has brought depreciation which had no inherent relationship to the actual character and traits of the Negroes.

In the most common instances of newly acquired neighborhoods, as all the studies examined have shown, a higher rental has been paid by the Negro newcomers than could be secured from the departing white occupants. The Chicago Commission on Race Relations went perhaps more thoroughly than previous study into this question and was able to make certain striking observations. What had actually happened in the area of alleged loss of value was that houses which had cost original owners \$50,000 to \$100,000 to erect when the neighborhood was fashionable had steadily and violently declined in value, after the removal of the first owners to newer localities, and this decline had occurred some twenty or thirty years before there was even a threat of Negro residence. Without such a radical decline these houses could not have been purchased by the Negroes, whose level of income carried a necessary restriction. The original owners in this area had been followed by successive economic and social gradations of white owners and tenants, until it became impracticable to secure rentals or prices comparable with the pretentiousness of the houses. The tenants moved to smaller and newer apartments, leaving them vacant. When Negroes first entered the area, agents were offering a month's rent free to encourage occupancy; they accepted small first payments on purchases and had sold as many as 1,100 to 3,000 buildings to Negroes who had migrated from the South, before the campaign for restriction was begun.

There had been other factors undermining values which had no relation to race. The area was flanked by the stockyards, with their obnoxious odors, on one side, and the smoke and grime of a large railroad on the other. The automobile industry had preceded the Negroes into the section, with its display shops and garages. The automobile at the same time had made it feasible for wealthier families to live some distance away from the center of the city.

Again, the wear and tear of the elements had deteriorated the dwellings, for most of them were thirty or more years old. Clandestine prostitutes had preceded the Negroes after the breaking up of the old red-light district. One Negro home, four times

bombed, had been purchased from a registered prostitute, and on a number of occasions raided before the Negroes invaded the area. The study of the Mayor's Interracial Committee of Detroit, conducted by the Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research, had this to say about real estate values and the Negro:

"There is a general feeling among the white people of Detroit that the Negro penetration of white residential areas causes depreciation in property values. This feeling is in itself a real cause of depreciation when property is sold, because of hysteria and without regard to market value. If a Negro penetrates into a very exclusive white residential district, there may be an effect on property values, as there is a very limited Negro market for high-priced dwellings. If a neighborhood where properties are moderately priced is 'invaded,' it is quite possible that real estate values will not fall and may even be appreciated by Negro purchase because the supply of decent, medium-priced houses for Negroes is smaller than the demand.

"The general deterioration of congested Negro areas cannot be attributed to Negro occupancy. For instance, other factors in the St. Antonio District, such as the entrance of commercial buildings, factories and garages, the concentration of vice resorts, etc., had depreciated the values of houses for residential purposes before the Negro moved in. After the entrance of the Negro, further depreciation takes place because of the consequent overcrowding on account of the effort to pay the rents charged.

"It is a part of the general movement in Detroit by the more substantial colored families to get out of the crowded districts and to secure good homes in respectable communities.

"The first colored family which entered this block did so as an individual matter. There is no evidence that this first buyer broke into the community with the idea of decreasing property valuation by his presence so that others of his race might thereby purchase property in the same neighborhood at a great advantage. Nor is there any evidence of a collective or conscious movement to wedge colored families into this block. The first family paid a high price for the property, but as the agent in the sale recalled it, he paid 'what was asked' and so got the place rather than a white purchaser who tried to bargain.

"There appears to be no evidence to show that white sellers up to the time of the study had lost because Negroes have moved into the block. White sellers received their price (although not always their *terms*), which they might have had trouble in getting from white purchasers. In the opinion of one of the real estate men, most of the residents on the street stood to lose on any transaction because they had bought at peak prices and in many instances not only asked their original price but added to it a substantial profit. These people could not find white purchasers, but they could find colored purchasers. On the other hand, another operator thought that the actual value of Harding Avenue property would have reached the value assumed by those who tried to sell, merely through the appreciation

of land and small improvements. He also stated that colored residents entering a community could not help but depreciate property values. This realtor had but one house listed for sale on Harding Avenue, and had never done any business on the street previous to this. When these contentions are subjected to the Harding Avenue study they both lose weight. If the Harding Avenue property was sold at its actual value, then neither party lost by the transaction and the colored purchaser merely outbid his white competitor. If the presence of colored in a white neighborhood depreciated actual property values as the white residents claimed and yet the colored purchaser paid the market value asked, apparently the colored buyer was the loser and not the former property owner.”<sup>22</sup>

It seems clear that social forces, in addition to the impersonal physical factors, have much to do with where Negroes shall live, and, by virtue of such determination, how they shall live. The experience of Negroes, in the mass, indicates quite definitely that the community cannot always be trusted to give, unaided by governmental authority, adequate attention to the weaker elements in its structure. What is needed by Negroes is not new legislation but protection against discriminating interpretations and applications of the basic laws now existing.

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<sup>22</sup> *The Negro in Detroit* (Section V, “Housing”), Prepared for the Mayor’s Interracial Committee, Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research, Inc., 1926. (Mimeographed.)

## CHAPTER III

### SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS IN NEGRO HOUSING

This division of the report is concerned with some of the social consequences of the type of housing provided for the Negro population, or which this population has been able to provide for itself. The data have been, in large part, assembled by a special group of which T. Arnold Hill of the National Urban League was chairman, and are supported by a special report which constitutes Appendix II, p. 143.

At least three types of social pathology have been observed to have a high and inescapable correlation with the character of Negro residence areas. These are:

- (1) A high rate of delinquency,
- (2) A high rate of mortality, and
- (3) A distorted standard of living.

#### Neighborhoods and Delinquency<sup>1</sup>

Volume II of the *Report on the Causes of Crime*, by the National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement,<sup>2</sup> devoted much space to the consideration of neighborhoods and their relation to the delinquency rate of boys. An analysis of the delinquency areas as plotted on the map of Chicago reveals several pertinent points:

1. There is a high percentage of delinquency in many of the areas where Negroes form more than 10 per cent of the population; but the percentage is no higher than that of the "back of the yards" district where almost no Negroes live, but where the same conditions of low wages, poor housing and overcrowding exist in the white population.

2. The percentage of delinquency decreases progressively as one's eye moves south from 31st Street into the district of better Negro homes. The percentage runs as follows in the area bounded on the west by State Street and on the south by Cottage Grove Avenue (the so-called black belt):

<sup>1</sup> For a more complete treatment of the subject of delinquency and housing, see special report prepared by Earl R. Moses, Director of Research, Chicago Urban League. Appendix II, p. 143.

<sup>2</sup> *Report on the Causes of Crime*, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1931, Vol. II, Ch. 2, pp. 23-59.

Table III. Delinquency in Selected Areas, Chicago

Area	Per cent delinquency	Per cent Negro to total population
22nd to 31st Streets .....	15.7	49
31st to 39th Streets .....	15.1	71
39th to 47th Streets .....	8.8	34
47th to 55th Streets .....	3.5	17

(This table is based on Juvenile Court appearances)

3. In the outlying sections where the Negroes are chiefly home owners, the percentage of delinquency is about as low as for similar sections where there are no Negroes, and lower than contiguous sections with a relatively high per cent of foreign born as compared with native whites, and where practically no Negroes live. In the Morgan Park area where 47.4 per cent<sup>3</sup> of the Negro residents owned their homes, the delinquency rate compares favorably with that of predominantly native white areas.

4. The "vice section" includes the northerly and most densely concentrated third of the "black belt."

5. Approximately one-third of the "black belt" is in the "zone in transition."

The zone in transition in the natural process of city expansion is described by E. W. Burgess:

"Surrounding the Central Business District are areas of residential deterioration caused by the encroaching of business and industry from Zone I" (the central business district). "This may therefore be called a Zone in Transition, with a factory district for its inner belt and an outer ring of retrogressing neighborhoods, of first-settlement immigrant colonies, of rooming-house districts, of homeless-men areas, of resorts of gambling, bootlegging, sexual vice, and of breeding-places of crime. In this area of physical deterioration and social disorganization our studies show the greatest concentration of cases of poverty, bad housing, juvenile delinquency, family disintegration, physical and mental disease. As families and individuals prosper, they escape from this area into Zone III" (one of workingmen's homes) "beyond, leaving behind as marooned a residuum of the defeated, leaderless, and helpless."<sup>4</sup>

The last sentence calls for further analysis, so far as Negroes are concerned. The escape into Zone 3 beyond, in the first place, must to a great degree depend on improvement of economic

<sup>3</sup> Woofter, T. J. Jr. and Associates, *Negro Problems in Cities*, Garden City, N. Y., Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1928. Census data of 1930.

<sup>4</sup> Burgess, Ernest W., "Urban Areas," *Chicago—An Experiment in Social Science Research*, (edited by T. V. Smith and L. P. White), Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1929, pp. 114-116.

status. There are doubtless many Negroes who are indifferent to such surroundings as those described above; there are some also who prefer such environment because it fits into their scheme of life; but there are many others who must remain solely because their low incomes compel them to. The Italian laborer who lands in Zone 2 on his arrival from Italy may or may not remain a strongback for the rest of his life, but it is a safe bet that his son will not be a strongback. He may become a racketeer, a skilled artisan, a bond salesman, or a bootblack. The Negro laborer from Georgia is pretty likely to remain a strongback until he is too old, and further than that his son has a good chance at only one of the vocations listed for the Italian boy, the last named. Or he may follow his father if, by the time he has grown up, the Mexicans have not preempted the laboring jobs.

Granted, however, that the Negro's economic status permits him to move on into Zone 3, vice follows him, at least in Chicago.

"The records of convictions in the morals court and the evidence of the Committee of Fifteen show the gradual drift of prostitution southward coincidentally with the expansions of the main area of Negro residence.

"Between 1916 and 1918 houses of prostitution decreased from forty-eight to twenty-five in number in the territory between 12th and 22d Streets and from 130 to 107 between 12th and 31st Streets. Between 31st and 35th Streets the number had slightly increased, while there was an increase of nearly 80 per cent between 35th and 39th Streets. In the combined districts between 31st and 39th Streets, the number increased from sixty-two to eighty-four; and between 39th and 55th Streets the increase was from eleven to fifty-four. . . . Further evidence of this movement of vicious resorts, and an abnormally large number of them, into the Negro areas was obtained from the state's attorney's office, the Commission's investigators, and from confidential reports submitted by other organizations. Most of these places are maintained by white persons, because in this district there is less likelihood of effective interference, either from citizens or public authorities."<sup>5</sup>

But even a real improvement in economic conditions does not open to the Negro family the same opportunity for moving into a better house and a better community environment, leaving out of the question the habit of the vicious element to seek proximity to it. It has been shown elsewhere in this work that the movement of Negroes into a new neighborhood (for them) is often met with hostility and not a few times with violence.

<sup>5</sup> The Chicago Commission on Race Relations, *The Negro in Chicago*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1922, p. 344.

The Negro area may expand, the expansion accompanied by rent raising as well as by opposition in many cases, but the Negro area must still remain Negro. The family of the immigrant, his financial status improved, may lose itself, especially in the second generation. It has become Americanized, and an attempt to improve its status is seldom frowned on. The Negro family that moves into a new quarter as often as not has its urge for betterment characterized as a desire to get away from its race or to "horn in where it is not wanted." As a matter of fact, the Negro has learned that there are very few places where he is wanted. Even in the humblest parts of Zone 2, he is often unwelcome. The Chicago Negro of the fourth generation is just as easily identified "as a Negro" by people who do not wish to live near Negroes as is the Negro just from the canebrakes. The second or third generation Irishman or Pole is simply an American citizen who is judged and classified by his neighbors according to his apparent financial standing and his behavior, like any other American. It is not at all strange, in the light of his low economic status and the social pressure of the group outside both taken together, that Dr. Paul F. Cressey finds that "the Negroes present a striking contrast to the increasing dispersion of the European immigrant groups in Chicago, for they have become more highly concentrated during the past twenty-two years." As the number of Negroes in the city has increased, fewer Negroes have lived scattered through predominantly white areas, and the greater has become their concentration in specific Negro communities.<sup>6</sup> So, aside from the tendency toward delinquency which seems to accompany overcrowded areas, the Negro communities would be expected to show a higher delinquency rate than similar white communities because, whereas the Negroes are concentrated, the Negro delinquent may be diffused throughout the Negro districts. On the other hand, though the foreign born and the youth of foreign-born parents contribute more than their share to the total of white delinquent boys, these foreign whites tend to be concentrated in districts, so keeping down the delinquency rate of other white districts. Vice, at least open vice, does not follow the foreigner moving into Zone 3.

The foreign born's neighborhood is socially more or less self-

<sup>6</sup> Cressey, Paul F., *The Succession of Cultural Groups*. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Chicago. 1930.

contained, but there is comparatively little social separation as between the Negro old settler and the new arrival from the South, for, however great the cultural difference may be in individual cases, the difference in economic status is hardly noticeable. Besides, the Negro in this country has been so conditioned as to recognize kinship. The newly arrived Negro immigrant from the South has no feeling of inferiority, however different his background from that of the Negro native. The common language and the tendency for the average white man to consider the similarity of all Negroes to extend from color and to embrace every other personal characteristic, combined with the larger factors already mentioned, tend to make the Negro community appear homogeneous when it is not. The greatest leveler, of course, is economic status. This tendency toward democracy in Negro communities has many points to commend it, but the fact remains that it tends to put the Negro group in a questionable position when social statistics are presented.

The Chicago Commission's report goes on to show that the zone in transition with its successive groups of unassimilated people tends to maintain a remarkably constant rate of delinquency. As the foreign born or their offspring absorb American customs and the standards of urban life, all except the most shiftless move into the next zones, while a new group of unassimilated people come in. With the movements into more socially healthful communities where neighborhood influences are both stronger and better, the delinquency rate drops. There does not appear to be an increase in the rate with the advent of the newcomers—first, because they represent the most adaptable of the original transitional area group; and secondly, because there is pressure both from within and without to mould them into the traditions of the new neighborhoods. The same processes are true for Negroes, but what we have tried to show is that their operation is modified in the case of Negroes by the following factors:

1. Low income keeps a larger proportion of Negroes in the area in transition, probably against the will of a large number of them.
2. The evil social environment often follows the Negroes uninvited into the new neighborhood, and vicious environment is more likely to be diffused throughout the Negro area of workingmen's homes than of white workingmen's homes.
3. There is a persistent (even when unorganized) pressure to keep enterprising Negroes out of desirable neighborhoods other than the recognized Negro section, which results in overcrowding of that section, with

an attendant lack of family privacy, and which makes statistical differentiation difficult.

What we mean by "differentiation" is illustrated in the words of E. Franklin Frazier. He is speaking of Chicago also:

"Juvenile delinquency is not the result only of the breakdown of family control. It is a part of the general dissolution of community life in the urban environment. In the cities for which statistics are available Negroes contribute much more than their share of the cases of juvenile delinquency and Chicago is not an exception to the general situation. In 1920 about a fifth of the delinquent boys brought before the juvenile court were Negroes. The proportion of Negro cases has been increasing rapidly during recent years. This increase has been associated with the fact that Negroes have been moving into those areas which have long been characterized by a high rate of delinquency although the racial composition of the area has changed several times. There were considerable variations in the rates of juvenile delinquency in the Negro community. In the areas where the poorer migrants settled and both family and community life were dissolving under the influence of urban life, about 40 per cent of the boys were arrested for delinquency. The rate did not show any marked change until one came to the better sections of the community, which were distinguished by more stable family life and some sort of community organization. . . . In the area of the community which showed considerable concentration of the higher occupational classes, a high percentage of home ownership, and other signs of stable family and community life, juvenile delinquency was almost entirely absent."<sup>7</sup>

### Mortality and Negro Housing

We may begin by saying that Negro death rates are nearly twice as high as the white; that they are higher in the North than in the South; that they are higher in cities than in the country; that the disparity between Negro urban and rural rates is over two and one-half times greater than that between white urban and rural rates; that Negro urban death rates are highest in the South. The diseases which, authorities agree, are due largely to unfavorable sanitary conditions and low economic status, show at present the greatest disparity between Negro and white rates. These are pulmonary tuberculosis, typhoid, malaria, pellagra and puerperal conditions. Tuberculosis is six times as high among Negro boys and girls as among white boys and girls.<sup>8</sup>

The Children's Bureau<sup>9</sup> in a study of infant mortality records

<sup>7</sup> Frazier, E. Franklin, "Family Disorganization Among Negroes," *Opportunity*, July, 1931, Vol. 9, p. 207.

<sup>8</sup> Memorandum on *Negro Health*, Department of Social Science, Fisk University, Nashville, Tenn.

<sup>9</sup> Woodbury, Robert M., *Causal Factors in Infant Mortality*, Washington, U. S. Children's Bureau, Bulletin 142, 1925.

found that the rate fluctuated significantly with the factors of rentals and congestion. Woofter<sup>10</sup> correlated Negro death rates from tuberculosis with congestion in New York City, and got a Pearsonian correlation coefficient of + .809. The Women's City Club of Louisville, investigating the incidence of tuberculosis, listed 300 dwellings in which there had been two or more deaths. A serious defect in lighting or ventilation was discovered in all. Deaths from tuberculosis in old and new law apartments in New York averaged 10.3 per 1,000 for the old and 6.5 per 1,000 for the new.

The most frequent explanation of the high Negro mortality has been a racial susceptibility to tuberculosis and the stress of the urban environment. This does not explain differences in mortality among Negroes in different circumstances. W. H. Jones,<sup>11</sup> in Washington, has provided figures which have a most significant bearing upon housing. The mortality of Negroes from four leading diseases is from one and a half to four times as great in the alley dwellings as on the streets. Important differences are observed between rates of mortality for such whites as live in alleys and on streets. Moreover, death rates for Negroes on streets in a number of instances were less than the rates for whites living in alleys. The gross differences in the racial mortality are helped by the fact that there were 331 white persons living in alleys and 12,867 Negroes.

### Living Standards

The first striking observation regarding Negro living expenditures is that they are required to spend a larger proportion of their income for rent than other groups. This may be attributed to the same causes that require them to pay, as a rule, more for the same kind of housing than other persons. The Negro's standard of comfort tends, in general, to be like that of the native white people with whom he comes in contact. The urban Negro, at least, has adopted, as far as possible, the standards of comfort of the American people in general, and the rural migrant to the city quickly falls in line. This process of "Americanizing" Negroes has been facilitated since slavery days by the employment of a large proportion of them in domestic service. The Negro, then,

<sup>10</sup> Woofter, T. J. Jr. and Associates, *Negro Problems in Cities*, Garden City, N. Y., Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1928.

<sup>11</sup> Jones, William Henry, *The Housing of Negroes in Washington*, D. C., Washington, Howard University Press, 1929.

is likely to be as "100 per cent American" in his standards of comfort as his income will allow him to be. His actual scale of comfort, also, is likely to be as high, for too often he cannot see an advantage in postponing the satisfaction of his desires. His chances for advancement do not encourage thrift, and no vision of the ascent from poor boy to third vice-president or of a junior partnership inspires him to wait. So if he wishes a better apartment he may pay a rent out of all proportion to his wage and make up the difference by taking in lodgers. He is enjoying some of the comforts which are always being brought to his attention even if he has to share them with outsiders. Such a person would think it better to have a bathtub and share it with a lodger or two now, than to do without it all his life.

The following paragraph illustrates a slightly different view of the same situation, the difficulties facing the Negro worker seeking to maintain a decent standard of living:

"The fact . . . that the Negro is the last hired and the first fired, has an important bearing on the situation. When asked why Negroes are thus treated, the employer is likely to give as his reason that the colored worker can best stand it. Apparently the notion that the Negro can adapt himself better is based on the fact that he will more quickly take in lodgers than whites and more generally permit the number of occupants per room to grow beyond reasonable limits. This may merely mean that the standards of living to which Negroes are subjected are already so low that unemployment forces emergency measures upon them faster than upon those groups that have other resources to fall back upon."<sup>12</sup>

In other words, the Negro can stand such conditions as he can stand hot and heavy work, because he can get no better. A great deal of evidence from different sources has been gathered to show that the Negro pays a higher proportion of his income for rent than do other people. In some cases, it may be due primarily to the generally low income of Negroes because of occupational status; in others, it may be due primarily to the exploitation of Negroes due to restriction of Negroes to certain residential areas; in still others, the desire for improved housing might outweigh consideration of cost. In most cases, however, we believe all these causative factors are present in varying degrees. A recent study by Dr. Houghteling<sup>13</sup> in Chicago emphasizes the first of these reasons, that is, low income due to low occupational status.

<sup>12</sup> Feldman, Herman, *Racial Factors in American Industry*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1931, p. 69.

<sup>13</sup> Houghteling, Leila, *The Income and Standard of Living of Unskilled Laborers in Chicago*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1927.

Dr. Houghteling's study is especially significant in a consideration of income and expenses because,

1. It is a study of unskilled wage earners, in which occupational classes such a large proportion of Negroes are found.
2. There was no attempt in gathering the information to get any proportion of Negro to white families, so that for comparison we have a "natural" and not an artificial control group.
3. The cases finally selected excluded men who had been employed for less than a year at the particular establishment, men who had been unemployed during the past year, and single men, as well as married men who did not have a child under fourteen years old.
4. Widows as heads of families are excluded.
5. Only heads of families for which accurate figures for a year's earnings could be secured *from the employer*, were included.

The following table is adapted from the work cited:

Table IV.

**Earnings of Chief Wage Earners Classified by Race; Cumulative Percentages (80 Negro, 343 White)**

Earnings of Chief Wage Earners	Cumulative Percentages		
	Total	White	Colored
Less than \$ 900.....	1.4	1.5	1.3
Less than 1,000.....	4.0	3.5	6.3
Less than 1,100.....	13.5	9.9	28.8
Less than 1,200.....	25.3	19.5	50.0
Less than 1,300.....	40.2	33.5	68.7
Less than 1,400.....	55.1	51.1	72.5
Less than 1,500.....	74.3	72.6	81.2
Less than 1,600.....	84.9	83.4	91.2
Less than 1,700.....	90.6	89.6	93.7
Less than 1,800.....	95.3	94.1	100.0
Less than 1,900.....	96.7	95.9	.....
Less than 2,000.....	98.4	97.9	.....
Less than 2,100.....	98.9	98.5	.....
Less than 2,200.....	99.8	99.7	.....
Less than 2,300.....	99.8	99.7	.....
Less than 2,400.....	100.0	100.0	.....

Thus, half of the Negro chief wage earners receive less than \$1,200 a year as compared to approximately 20 per cent of the white chief wage earners. (All the chief wage earners were

males, married, and having at least one child under fourteen.) Six per cent of the white chief wage earners earned more than \$1,800, but none of the Negro.

Speaking specifically of the relation of rent to income in the white and Negro families, Dr. Houghteling says:<sup>14</sup>

"Taking the group as a whole, nearly one-half spent between 10 and 20 per cent of the father's earnings for rent; a little over one-fourth spent between 20 and 30 per cent for rent. . . . More than 80 per cent of the colored families spent 20 per cent or more of the earnings of the chief wage earners for rent, while among the white families only 30 per cent paid that large a proportion."

The two following tables adapted from the same study are illuminating. The family fund includes income from lodgers, working mothers and children, investments, and all other sources:

Table V.

Per Cent of Earnings of Chief Wage Earner Spent for Rent*	All Families		White Families		Colored Families	
	Num- ber	Per Cent Distri- bution	Num- ber	Per Cent Distri- bution	Num- ber	Per Cent Distri- bution
Total Reported.....	301	100.0	226	100.0	75	100.0
Less than 10.....	25	8.3	25	11.1	..	.....
10-19.....	147	48.8	133	58.9	14	18.7
20-29.....	83	27.6	55	24.4	28	37.3
30-39.....	25	8.3	8	3.5	17	22.6
40-49.....	11	3.7	3	1.3	8	10.7
50 and over.....	10	3.3	2	.8	8	10.7

\* Houghteling, Leila, *The Income and Standard of Living of Unskilled Laborers in Chicago*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1927, p. 113.

It is a striking fact that although 11 per cent of the white heads of families and 23 per cent of the white families fall in the less than 10 per cent group, there are no Negroes under the 10 per cent level in either table; and whereas the proportion of whites in the highest percentage for rent class is less than one per cent,

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 112.

10 per cent of Negro chief wage earners and  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent of Negro families are in that class.

Table VI.

Per Cent of Family Fund Spent for Rent*	All Families		White Families		Colored Families	
	Number	Per Cent Distribution	Number	Per Cent Distribution	Number	Per Cent Distribution
Total Reported.....	334	100.0	254	100.0	80	100.0
Less than 10.....	59	17.7	59	23.2	..	....
10-19.....	171	51.1	146	57.5	25	31.4
20-29.....	72	21.6	41	16.1	31	38.7
30-39.....	24	7.2	6	2.4	18	22.4
40-49.....	8	2.4	2	.8	6	7.5

\* Houghteling, Leila, *The Income and Standard of Living of Unskilled Laborers in Chicago*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1927, p. 113.

Pittsburgh: Two studies<sup>15</sup> made in the same year, 1929 (one in the late winter and early spring and the other in midsummer), permit a check on rental and income in the Hill District of Pittsburgh.

Table VII. Income and Rental, Hill District, Pittsburgh.

	Hall	Reid
Average weekly family income.....	\$32.02	\$29.10
Average weekly wage, male head of family.....	27.09	27.24
Median weekly wage.....	31.00	31.80
Median monthly rent .....	38.00	36.70
Average monthly rent .....	....	32.76
Percentage of families having lodgers.....	33.34	35.00
Per cent of total family income for rent (average).....	24.4	38.1
Estimate of People's Savings Trust Co. for city as a whole.		14.62

<sup>15</sup> Hall, Wiley A., *Negro Housing and Rents in the Hill District of Pittsburgh*, (M. A. Thesis) University of Pittsburgh, 1929. (Unpublished.)

Reid, Ira De A., *Social Conditions of the Negro in the Hill District of Pittsburgh*, General Committee on the Hill Survey, Pittsburgh (National Urban League), 1930.

As to rent and income, Mr. Hall reports that 24.4 per cent of the total family income (which includes the contribution of one lodger to every three families) went for rent. It is to be noted also in this connection that in the great majority of these dwellings heat is not supplied by the landlord. In his study, Mr. Reid points out that in one-fourth of the families the mother also worked away from home; yet, he adds, in only 23 per cent of the families was the income for one week greater than the monthly rent.

Students of family income and expenditures generally set the reasonable proportion of the family income to be spent for rent at 20 per cent or less. A study of small-wage earners in Chicago<sup>16</sup> found the following proportions of families in three racial groups paying out more than 20 per cent of their incomes for rent: Mexican, 22.9 per cent; other foreign-born white, 34.6 per cent; Negro, 77.2 per cent. The author says that these figures were based on monthly earnings "of the previous month, when unemployment had been less severe than it had been in the six months preceding the presidential election."

The following figures also for Chicago are adapted from data obtained in 1921:<sup>17</sup>

"The remaining 179 cases out of the 274 provided data from which the following facts are presented: In three instances the rent exceeded the income of the head of the family; in thirty-one instances the rent equaled one-half the income of the head of the family, and in an equal number it amounted to one-third. In one case the rent was equal to three-fourths of the income, and in twenty-three cases the rent equaled one-fourth. Thus eighty-nine instances were disclosed in which the rent was in excess of one-fifth of the income of the head of the family. In most of these cases, particularly the extreme ones, the income of the head of the family was greatly supplemented by money received from lodgers or from earnings of other members of the family.

"The remaining ninety families in which the rent amounted to one-fifth or less of the income of the head of the family were divided as follows: Twenty-four fell in the one-fifth column, twenty-seven in the one-sixth column, fourteen in the one-seventh column, eleven in the one-eighth column, while fourteen were in the 'low' column. The last named included those ranging from one-ninth to one-twenty-third."

A few conclusions from studies of other cities tend to establish as a fact that whether in relation to the total family income or the

<sup>16</sup> Hughes, Elizabeth A., *Living Conditions for Small-Wage Earners in Chicago*, Bureau of Social Surveys, Chicago Department of Public Welfare, 1925.

<sup>17</sup> The Chicago Commission on Race Relations, *The Negro in Chicago*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1922.

wage of the chief wage earner, the Negro's rent runs well over 20 per cent of his budget.

Detroit: "The weighted mean monthly rent for 91 families was \$47.29. . . . The average amount of rent paid monthly is approximately equal to one-third of the average monthly wage."<sup>18</sup>

"The group of Negro families in West Harlem, in all the income levels, shows higher actual rentals and higher percentage of income used for rent than any other section of the city. Where other families in the city pay about one-sixth of their income for rent, these colored families pay nearly one-third. And although the income of the Negro family is about 17 per cent lower than that of the typical family for the entire city, it must pay almost three dollars more per room per month. In West Harlem, also, the percentage of families having two or more persons per room is somewhat higher than elsewhere (10 per cent rather than 8½ per cent), and the percentage of families having more than one and less than two persons per room is correspondingly lower."<sup>19</sup>

Comparison:<sup>19</sup>

Table VIII. Income and Rental, New York.

	Typical Family Entire City	Typical Family West Harlem
Annual income .....	\$1,570.00	\$1,300.00
Annual rent .....	316.00	480.00
Rent per room per month.....	6.67	9.50
Per cent of income used for rent .....	19.23	32.97

It is also the purpose of the study to obtain statements of the earnings per month of households. These statements were not restricted to the earnings of the heads of families, but included the supplementary earnings of children and earnings obtained through lodgers and otherwise. Frequently the amount of earnings in a household could not be accurately stated because many of the men were doing odd jobs and casual labor. Table IX, below, shows the relationship of monthly earnings to the amount of monthly rental. It is customarily accepted that at least one-fifth of the income should go for shelter. In studying the Negro family it would be impossible to give an accurate basis for

<sup>18</sup> *The Negro in Detroit* (Section V, "Housing"), Prepared for the Mayor's Interracial Committee, Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research, Inc., 1926. (Mimeographed.)

<sup>19</sup> Batchelor, Carey, *What the Tenement Family Has and What It Pays for It*, New York, United Neighborhood Houses, 1928. (Unpublished.)

monthly earnings unless supplementary incomes were added. Even so, the proportion paying 20 per cent or more of their income for rent is twenty times greater than the group paying less than 20 per cent for shelter. It is not to be doubted that those paying less than 20 per cent of their earnings in rent could afford to live in better houses were they available. The houses in the first group are of the less desirable nature—old, dark, unsanitary, and possibly too costly at any rental. The significant thing in the community is that apparently the small-wage-earning Negro's family is compelled to dwell in a house for which it pays more than it can afford on the one hand—while the houses occupied are too costly for the returns the tenant receives.

**Table IX. Per Cent Reporting Whose Rental is Specified  
Per Cent of Monthly Earnings**

Total, 2,326	Total reporting, 2,160	Not reporting, 166
		Per cent      Number

10 per cent and less than 20 per cent.....	4.7	102
20 per cent and less than 30 per cent.....	21	444
30 per cent and less than 40 per cent.....	26	570
More than 40 per cent.....	48	1,044

The amount that can be apportioned to rent is obviously affected by the size of the income as well as the amount of rental. It was possible to obtain statements of the aggregate earnings in one month in 1,316 families. How representative these earnings may be for the other eleven months may only be conjectures. As the employment is more or less varied and not governed by any one industry, women workers would not be affected more than men in the several industries.

The following table shows the proportions reporting specified earnings in a given month:

**Table X. Per Cent of 1,316 Families Reporting Earnings  
of Specified Amounts in One Month**

	Less than \$75	Less than \$100	Less than \$125	Less than \$150	Less than \$175	Less than \$200	\$200 or more
Families in each class.....	209	480	457	127	28	11	4
Per cent of total in each class	15.8	36.7	34.7	9.6	2.1	.9	.3
Cumulative per cent total...	15.8	52.5	87.2	96.8	98.8	99.7	100.

Paying high rental is clearly out of the question for the majority of these families, yet on May 2, 1927, one wage earner brings a notice from his landlord to the effect that on and after June 1, 1927, rents in the apartment house where he lives will be raised as follows:

- 4 rooms from \$50 to \$90.
- 5 rooms from \$60 to \$100.
- 6 rooms from \$70 to \$120.

Eighty-seven per cent of the families should not pay more than \$30 per month for rent. Less than a third of the families, on the basis of one-fifth of their incomes apportioned to rent, could afford rentals above \$40 to \$45 a month. In 18 per cent of the 1,316 families, fathers were the sole bread-winners. Mothers and wives were employed in 63 per cent of the families studied; two per cent had no wives or mothers; in 35 per cent the women were not gainfully employed. This does not include the keeping of lodgers.<sup>20</sup>

Data gathered very recently in Elizabeth, New Jersey, a small eastern industrial city, from 210 Negro families give the relation of rent to family income.<sup>21</sup>

**Table XI. Relation of Rent to Family Income, 210 Negro Families, Elizabeth, N. J.**

<i>Proportion of family incomes spent for rent</i>	<i>Number of families</i>	<i>Per cent distribution</i>	<i>Cumulative percentages</i>
Less than 15 per cent.....	40	19.05	
15 to 19 per cent.....	62	29.52	48.57
20 to 24 per cent.....	44	20.96	69.53
25 to 29 per cent.....	21	10.00	79.53
30 to 34 per cent.....	25	11.90	91.43
35 to 39 per cent.....	6	2.86	94.29
40 to 44 per cent.....	4	1.90	96.19
45 to 49 per cent.....	3	1.43	97.62
50 and over .....	5	2.38	100.00

In one-third of these families the total family income included wages of working wives and rent collected from lodgers.

<sup>20</sup> Reid, Ira De A., *Twenty-four Hundred Negro Families in Harlem*, New York, New York Urban League, 1927.

<sup>21</sup> Reid, Ira De A., *The Negro Population of Elizabeth, New Jersey*, Elizabeth Interracial Committee, 1930. (Unpublished.)

An analysis of the family life of two hundred Negro families in Newark, New Jersey,<sup>22</sup> is interpretive of the conditions previously mentioned in this section. This special analysis was made possible by the New Jersey Conference of Social Work, which organization is conducting a study of the social and economic problems of Negroes in New Jersey. The two hundred families covered in this section represent a sample of families interviewed by investigators in Newark, New Jersey, during June, 1931.

This material on Negro family life distinctly differs from sample studies usually presented as interpreting problems of Negro family life from one point of view, at least, in that it mirrors the status of the families of marginal workers during a period of prolonged unemployment and industrial depression. Detailed analysis of the several factors involved are given in the tables presented in this section.

These families reside in the third and fourth wards of Newark, areas known as zones in transition, representing to a great extent the least desirable residential section of the city. Significant is the fact that while 62 per cent of these families have lived in Newark five years or less, 80 per cent of them have lived in their present quarters for five years or less.

The total persons included in these families were 1,081, the median size household being five persons. Of this number 515 were under sixteen years of age. These homes were relatively free from lodgers and relatives. There was one lodger in every eight families, while only one family in every four had relatives residing within its abode. Heads of a few families stated that they formerly had lodgers but had lost them when unemployment forced them to seek work elsewhere. Thus, the median size family was rather high. (4.7 persons.) The distribution of these families on the basis of their composition is as follows:

Table XII. Composition of Families, Newark.

Total families .....	200
Families without lodgers or relatives .....	127
Families with lodgers.....	27
Families with relatives.....	41
Families with relatives and lodgers.....	5

<sup>22</sup> By Ira De A. Reid, Director of Research, National Urban League.

The adult portion of these families—those sixteen years of age and over—is chiefly southern born. In fact 83 per cent of all the adult persons were born in the following states: Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia. Only 4 per cent were New Jersey born. On the other hand, three-fourths of the population under sixteen were born in Newark, while less than 1 per cent of the remaining fourth were born in the North.

These families live in single- or two-family houses; the construction may be brick (in need of painting) or frame (in need of painting). The general environmental conditions are those to be found in any community where the municipality has seen due cause for condemning structures as unfit for habitation. Condemnation and demolition of houses have been under way in this section of Newark. In fact houses occupied by 11 families included in this analysis have been officially condemned.

In the main these houses are lacking in modern conveniences. Less than half of the families (86) have baths. In 59 houses the water-closets were either in the hall or in the yard. In 51 houses there was no electric light. In 39 houses there were one or more windowless bedrooms. Yet, the ratio of persons to rooms (1 to 6 persons per room exclusive of kitchens and baths) was not indicative of overcrowding.

What might be called the "type" family of this group lives in a four-room frame house for which it pays \$5.88 weekly or \$25.58 monthly. But 37 families reported being from one to six months in arrears with their rent. This fact points to one of the pertinent factors in the whole situation—unemployment.

Sixty per cent of the employable persons<sup>23</sup> in these families were unemployed at the time of this analysis. Of 457 (261 male, 196 female) employable persons, only 180 (126 male, 54 female) were employed. Of 164 employed persons for whom data were available, 112 were employed on part-time jobs only. In 96 families there was no wage income during the first three weeks of June, 1931.

The median weekly wage for the 102 remaining families for which data were available was \$13.33. With a wage economy offering little financial adjustment it became necessary for fam-

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<sup>23</sup> An employable person is herein described as a person fifteen years of age and over, physically and mentally fit, who has previously been engaged at some occupation.

ilies to seek supplementary income. This was had by 133 families and averaged \$5.54 weekly. However, there remained 62 families having no money income of any kind. The chief methods of supplementing family incomes were public and private outdoor relief.

**Table XIII. Source of Income Other Than Earnings of Members of the Family for 140 Families, Newark, New Jersey.**

Source of Income	Distribution
1. Lodgers and boarders .....	27
2. Allowance from city .....	47
3. Widows' pension .....	4
4. Other pensions .....	5
5. Contributions, relatives* or friends .....	5
6. Aid from charity organizations .....	20
7. Miscellaneous and not stated.....	8
8. Policy writing commission .....	4
COMBINATIONS OF ABOVE SOURCES:	
Sources 2 and 6 .....	6
Sources 2 and 5 .....	2
Sources 1 and 6 .....	3
Sources 1 and 5 .....	3
Sources 1 and 2 .....	3
Sources 1 and 7 .....	1
Sources 2 and 7 .....	1
Sources 2 and 3 .....	1
	140

\* Nonresident.

### Some Social Implications of High Rents and Low Wages

High rents and low wages mean working mothers.

"From a total of eighty-seven Negro families, forty-one mothers or 47.1 per cent worked in comparison with sixty-seven white mothers, 17.8 per cent of the 377 white families reported on."<sup>24</sup>

Of these forty-one women, the report shows further that twenty were engaged in day work or housework and eight were laundry workers.

High rent and low wages necessitate lodgers. Fourteen and seven-tenths per cent of the white families and 50.6 per cent of the Negro families in Dr. Houghteling's study had lodgers. She says:

<sup>24</sup> Reid, Ira De A., *The Negro Population of Elizabeth, New Jersey*, Elizabeth Interracial Committee, 1930. Unpublished.

Table XIV. Total Weekly Earnings, 200 Heads of Families, Compared With Weekly Rents,  
Newark.

Number Dollars weekly Number Weekly Earnings	Total	Not Given	None	Less Than 4	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28	30	32	40
	200	2	93	4	7	10	16	10	7	6	2	10	10	4	7	5	2	3	—	2
Total, heads of families ..	200	2	93	4	7	10	16	10	7	6	2	10	10	4	7	5	2	3	—	2
Number dollars weekly rents																				
Less than 4.....	11	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
4 to 4.99.....	20	—	13	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—
5 to 5.99.....	65	—	38	2	5	3	2	2	—	3	2	2	4	—	—	1	1	—	—	—
6 to 6.99.....	41	—	17	1	1	2	6	5	3	—	—	1	—	—	3	2	—	—	—	—
7 to 7.99.....	26	—	13	—	—	2	3	—	—	1	—	—	2	2	1	—	—	1	1	—
8 to 8.99.....	14	1	4	—	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	1	1	—	2	1	1
9 to 9.99.....	7	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	2
10 to 10.99.....	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
11 to 11.99.....	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
12 to 12.99.....	6	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
Not given.....	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
No rent*.....	5	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—

\* 2 owners, 3 janitors-rent free

"This difference is not surprising as the earnings of the Negroes have been shown to be so much lower than those of the white laborers that additional sources of income would naturally be necessary. Moreover, the fact that Negroes are charged a proportionately higher rent than white people often necessitates the renting of rooms in order to meet the high rent."

High rents and low wages along with segregation necessitate overcrowding.

#### General Observations on Social and Economic Factors<sup>25</sup>

Though considerable thought has been given by civic associations and racial groups to the universally poor housing conditions among Negroes, the wage-earning group has benefited little from the few housing projects that have come to pass. The most significant newer projects have not been for those who suffer most from the ills of poor tenements, unwholesome neighborhoods, high rents and exploitation by unscrupulous promoters. On the contrary, whether for renters or owners, they have been set up for those occupying the highest income level in the race.

Better housing has come not as the result of planning but of necessity, due to the need for more area for growing Negro populations. It was then that Negro tenants and home owners braved intimidation from whites and moved into neighborhoods formerly housing only whites. Riots and bloodshed frequently followed, but the pioneers stayed until others followed and then the area gradually was conceded to Negro occupancy. It is significant that housing developments for Negroes did not lead the way into better neighborhoods, but they took form only after the neighborhood had been established as a Negro district.

Thus the bulk of Negroes still live where health standards are hardest to maintain, where juvenile delinquency shows highest ratio, where vice goes unchecked, and where rents are far in excess of value and ability of occupants to meet them.

Home ownership among Negroes is increasing despite the difficulties of financing and the high interest rate paid for second mortgages. Not infrequently does the second mortgage run to 20 per cent. With urban population growing in all cities in which Negroes live, frequently at a ratio greater than that of whites, as for instance Chicago, Buffalo, etc., financing homes becomes

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<sup>25</sup> Prepared by the Group on Social and Economic Factors in Negro Housing, T. Arnold Hill, Chairman.

one of the important problems faced by Negroes in all parts of the country.

A chief source of revenue for both renters and home buyers is lodgers. The extent to which morals and health are jeopardized by the promiscuous taking in of roomers has been well established by many studies. This is one of the principal evils in Negro housing, and the failure to remedy it the principal defect in the vast majority of projects constructed for Negro occupancy.

Though the number of homes owned by members of the race has grown steadily, the number of new homes occupied by them has been infinitesimal. In the South and North they have occupied houses vacated by whites after the neighborhood has changed physical complexion through a series of deteriorating steps. New construction has for the most part been confined to apartment buildings with a few notable exceptions of subdivisions of one-family houses. New construction, whether of apartments or one-family houses, has been the work of promoters whose first thought was financial rather than social gain. As a consequence little thought has been given to architectural design, the social status of the prospective occupants, or environmental influence for children. A study of the "invasion" of Negroes into so-called "white" areas reveals the pioneers as socially prominent families who had nothing in common with their less cultured neighbors, who rebelled against vice and crime permitted by city authorities, and who tired of looking at unkempt exteriors.

In a recent article entitled "Hovels for Homes"<sup>28</sup> Miss Mary E. McDowell, quoting a housing study made by the Chicago Department of Public Welfare in 1925, states:

"It is no solution of the problem of housing wage-earning families of any nationality or color to let them have the almost worn out, sloughed-off houses of other racial groups which have prospered enough economically to seek more new and desirable places of residence. And yet, how pitifully few are the examples in this country of an earnest, intelligent search for any other way of meeting the needs of working families for decent homes."

Housing provides conditions favorable or unfavorable to health, morals, and economic efficiency. The effect of these conditions is just as outstanding in urban as in rural areas. The statement of

<sup>28</sup> See *Opportunity*, March, 1929, Vol. 7, No. 3, p. 74, quoting from Hughes, Elizabeth A., *Living Conditions for Small-Wage Earners in Chicago*, Chicago Department of Public Welfare, 1925.

John Ihlder, Executive Director of the Pittsburgh Housing Association, that "the Negro housing problem in Pittsburgh as a race problem is economic," may be applied to the total problem of Negro housing in the United States. It is, of course, true that during days of comparative prosperity the wages of Negro workers have been insufficient to permit the building up of a substantial money reserve. Consequently they, in larger proportion than other racial groups, are compelled to live in dwellings below the standard that is acceptable to socially minded individuals and social agencies interested in the problem of housing. Unemployment, with its attending problems, has made the suffering endured by Negroes very severe. Concentrated in the poorest districts of the city, they feel with greater intensity the poverty which attends their low economic status.

The racial factors in the problem of housing are very largely those prompted by whites in an attempt to limit the areas in which Negroes may live. Attempts to crystallize this attitude in public opinion in some instances lead to racial conflict. There are inhibitions and handicaps imposed upon the Negro as a Negro. He has not so free a choice in the selection of his residence as the white man. Within recent years, however, in both North and South, where there has been a surplus of dwellings, this fact has not the significance that it had a few years ago. In several cities this surplus of residential structures had made it possible to demolish a number of structures to prevent their being occupied.

In the bibliography of this report, p. 260, there are listed more than forty surveys and investigations that have revealed, from time to time, atrocious housing conditions which shocked the public into temporary interest; which, because they lacked a steady, consistent follow-up, brought little, if any, improvement in the conditions presented. In 1928 the Council of Social Agencies in Richmond, Virginia, conducted a most intensive survey of the leading problems of Negroes in that city, devoting particular attention to the problems of housing. The findings of this survey provoked much comment and alarm. But, in September, 1931, the Richmond (Virginia) *News-Leader*, in a series of eight articles on housing, pointed out that many new houses for Negroes had been "built in open violation of the building code of the city."

In improving the general housing situation, one of the most fundamental approaches appears to be that of raising the stand-

ards of the poorest housing permitted in a locality. This happens to be a housing problem, and for Negroes principally, because of their economic condition and not because of their race.

Any constructive recommendation for improving the general character of housing conditions among Negroes in the immediate future should be, according to Mr. Ihlder, (previously quoted) a double-barreled program, and includes:

1. Creating among Negroes themselves a desire for the maintenance of pleasant, attractive neighborhoods or blocks.

2. Emphasizing to white house owners and agents that there are different kinds of Negroes just as there are different kinds of whites, and that some of the Negroes are among the most desirable tenants obtainable.

"An attractive Negro block or neighborhood is the best argument possible in convincing a white owner or agent that all Negroes are not shiftless or irresponsible, an easy generalization into which lazy-minded individuals incline to fall."

Improved housing conditions demand the cooperation of the occupant. This can be secured only as a result of education. The award systems developed by housing associations and employers who fostered plans of industrial housing have succeeded in many instances in creating a better plane of living for their occupants. The education of the community or any particular segment of the community in home improvement or homemaking is eminently a matter of neighborhood concern. To communicate good standards of housing and homemaking to those who lack them—particularly migrant families who have recently moved to urban centers and who are more able than formerly to maintain them—one must depend upon the formative power of this neighborhood influence. Landlords and employers are not the only leaders who have attempted to develop this sentiment.

Under the auspices of Better Homes in America, state Negro Better Homes committees have been organized in thirteen states, and between 1928 and 1931 there was an increase in the total number of local Negro Better Homes committees from 229 to 925.

One of the best known of these projects is that conducted at the Penn School, St. Helena Island, South Carolina, where very comprehensive and distinctive work is done each year. Campaigns are conducted each year for improving home conditions in all communities. In Topeka, Kansas, at the Phyllis Wheatley Center, there is a home information center.

The work of the home demonstration agents in rural com-



*Courtesy of Better Homes in America*

The Negro Better Homes Committee of Albemarle County, Virginia, chose this unattractive house for a reconditioning demonstration during the Better Homes Campaign of 1928.



*Courtesy of Better Homes in America*

The same house reconditioned inside and out is now being used as a home for aged Negro women. This picture shows what paint and a few boards and nails will do. The porch was extended over the window, the old picket fence torn away, and a wire fence put up in its place.



munities of the South has also been a very positive factor in improving housing of rural communities. In these sections, where farmers live mainly in cheap buildings, erected before the land was paid for and where the type of architecture is far from satisfactory, there is a field for very earnest effort.

Experiments in social amelioration must be made by private agencies. Experience has shown that, after the method has been worked out and the practicability of the procedure demonstrated, the city and state will satisfactorily carry on these projects. For the homes in poorer districts, and particularly Negro homes, it is necessary that there be competent, reliable building inspectors, capable of enforcing proper legislation; who will condemn hopelessly unsanitary buildings and enforce their improvement or demolition. Furthermore, pressure should be brought to bear on those municipalities that permit the constant depression of homes for poorer groups, particularly Negroes, by tolerating inferior paving, grading, walks, lighting, street cleaning, sanitation and policing in neighborhoods inhabited by those who can least provide for themselves. Groups of people residing in these areas are seldom taxpayers, but their share in the proceeds of industry is less than any other group. In such situations, it is the business of government, not to render worse the inequalities of distribution, but to do something toward restoring a just balance in its application to that portion of the social income which it exacts in taxes.

Yet, all of the faults of our present housing program are not to be laid at the door of the owner or of the municipal government. There is also fault with the tenant. Many are accustomed to low standards, and if placed in model tenements would soon make them unsightly, unsanitary and dilapidated. The erection of model tenements themselves for a marginal group would not necessarily improve the situation. A classic example of this is Glasgow, Scotland, when a few years ago it decided to build new sanitary dwellings for a portion of its slum population that was then living in deplorable hovels. After moving the old slum dwellers into new houses, the city fathers sat back and breathed a sigh of relief at having solved their problem. Ten years afterwards Glasgow discovered rather suddenly that its model homes had become slums, only then learning that the price of good housing is eternal vigilance.

The improvement of these conditions, however, demands more

than a mere negation. The great American habit of generalizing is just as responsible for this lack of improvement as it is for the creation of these causes. In many quarters the contention is held that Negroes do not desire improvements in their housing facilities, or that at least they make no demands for them. There is, of course, an element of truth in this contention. The responsibility for improving such conditions is as much the duty of the Negro tenant or home owner as it is that of the public official. However, too much of our emphasis has been placed upon providing new homes for all the underprivileged. This approach to an improvement of the housing problem is not only impractical but impracticable. Since one of the basic factors with which we are concerned is that the Negro is a small-wage earner, a marginal worker, and for the present at least, is severely handicapped by these restrictions, and since the philanthropic projects providing housing accommodations for Negroes have been confined to a few large centers and meet the needs of only a small portion of the population, it seems feasible that more and more effort should be directed toward the demolishing of unfit houses and the reconditioning of houses and neighborhoods occupied by Negroes.

"Existing houses worthy of reconditioning constitute, today, a vast potential resource of housing betterment" is the opinion of one of the most active housing associations. Toward improving these conditions and keeping in mind all of the social and economic factors that are involved in the present problem, the body politic, be it municipal or state, should be called upon to at least enforce the sanitary and housing laws in the Negro areas. Cooperating in this effort should be all the social and health groups in a particular community. The value of such a program would be enhanced if groups would undertake educating not only the Negro tenant in the value of improving such neighborhoods as they already have, but also in educating the white public—particularly landlords of Negro dwellings—on the types of Negroes that they might possibly have as tenants. It should be shown that there are Negroes of every stage of social development and that many of them have standards high enough to justify the greatest care on the part of landlords. Furthermore, property owners should be encouraged to make available to Negro tenants good houses rather than the many dilapidated structures that are now offered them.

Thus, there appear two phases of housing work that must be carried on if this problem of housing for Negroes is to be met. While these phases are distinct in purpose and method, they are necessary supplements to each other.

The first of these methods sets definite minimum standards below which no dwelling shall be permitted to fall. The Negro, being so largely a part of the lowest-income group, is particularly affected by these standards.

The second of these methods points the way to improved housing. It experiments, and demonstrates practical programs. Most important in this field of social and economic factors, though it is outside the field of housing, is the increase of tenants' income. Nevertheless, it conditions housing. Instead of assuming that Negroes must live in habitations rather than homes because of their poverty, the new approach must be based upon the assumption that Negroes must be given the opportunity to earn more than they may pay an economic rent.

Two facts stand out prominently in our perusal of investigations made on this subject: There has been no provision made for the more or less substantial family who wants and desires a choice of several neighborhoods, or for the poorer group who, though it cannot afford high rents, needs a wholesome environment and pleasant atmosphere when a hard day's work is done. There is proof in figures and in testimony of mortgage owners that the Negro is a good housing risk. Social statistics substantiate the need for better homes, and the varying degrees of culture and income within the race argue for houses of contrasting design in districts sufficiently diverse to permit of varied choices.

It is of first importance, in a better homes project for working classes of any racial group, that houses should be constructed in decent neighborhoods and sold at a figure which their income will afford and at rates which will not interfere with health, education and happiness. The Negro is no exception to this acknowledged rule. The appreciation of such a principle, however, requires conscious planning on the part of individuals who are not averse to departing from the custom usually followed in locating houses for all Negroes in one or more overcrowded and unhygienic neighborhoods.

With such a goal there is room for a serious housing program to correct the abuses here mentioned. Enlightened municipalities,

many of which have already concerned themselves with housing plans, might undertake to rid communities of unsightly and unhealthy tenements and at the same time add to the comfort and contentment of their Negro citizens. Private capital, of the sort that works for humanity as well as gain, of which a goodly share has already been spent for better homes among whites, might be turned to Negro housing with pecuniary benefit to itself as well as service in a much neglected cause.

## CHAPTER IV

### HOME OWNERSHIP

Home ownership is one index to social stability and good citizenship. In 1920, about 45 per cent of all American families were home owners. It is observed that families earning less than \$1,500 a year cannot afford to buy a home that will include the necessary standards of healthful and comfortable living<sup>1</sup> unless this is done in a section of the country where materials and labor are cheap. It should be mentioned in this connection that the bulk of the Negro population at present falls within the low-income ranges. Over 67 per cent of the working population, as compared with 34 per cent of the total, are either farmers or domestic servants, and these are notoriously low-paid occupations. There was no separate tabulation of Negro home owners in 1920. In 1910, however, there were 506,590 home owners and 1,666,428 renters. *The Negro Year Book* makes an estimate for 1930 of 750,000 owned and 1,920,000 rented houses. In 1866, however, this population owned only about 12,000 homes.

The migration of Negroes from South to North coincided with the war-time industrial activity. Home buying was stimulated, as a means of escaping the congested and restricted rental areas. Some of these migrants continued their ownership of homes in the South.

Authentic information as to Negro home ownership of recent date is scarce. The most detailed information on the subject is probably found in *Negro Problems in Cities* edited by Woofter; in *The Negro in Chicago*, the report of the Chicago Commission on Race Relations; and in Jones' *Housing of Negroes in Washington, D. C.* These are supplemented by other less pretentious studies and interviews in a number of southern cities.<sup>2</sup>

Woofter's study covered fifteen cities North and South, and the other two were studies of their respective localities. He noted

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<sup>1</sup> *Better Homes Manual*, edited by Blanche Halbert, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1931.

<sup>2</sup> From report of Group on Social and Economic Factors in Negro Housing, T. Arnold Hill, Chairman.

a marked increase in home buying among Negroes between 1910 and 1920 and a greater increase between 1920 and 1925. The reasons assigned for this increase include increasing of opportunities in industry, higher wages, and a growing familiarity with urban living conditions. His study of eight southern and seven northern cities revealed the following facts about home ownership in 1920:

1. Four southern cities showed a large increase over 1910.
2. Two southern cities showed a steady increase.
3. Two southern cities showed a decrease in the total number of Negro homes, but an increase in the number of homes owned by Negroes.
4. All the northern cities indicated some buying, with Dayton, Ohio, at the top of the list and New York City at the bottom. (Table XVI, p. 81.)
5. Negro home ownership in the North had about doubled since 1910.

Three cities are surveyed in some detail: Memphis, New York City, and Chicago.

In Memphis from 1910 to 1920 the percentage of occupant-owned homes increased from 11 per cent to 15 per cent. The table below indicates the rapidity of Negro home buying in Memphis:<sup>3</sup>

**Table XV. Comparison of Negro Home Ownership, 1910-1920, Memphis.**

	1910	1920	Per Cent Increase
Total homes .....	14,878	19,132	28.6
Total owned .....	1,672	2,867	71.5
Owned free .....	1,039	1,673	61.0
Owned mortgaged .....	522	940	80.0
Owned unknown .....	111	254	...

The high percentage of mortgaged houses, it is explained, is somewhat indicative of the rate of buying, as a mortgaged house usually means a comparatively recent investment, while a house owned free usually indicates buying started years before.

Negroes are buying largely in outlying woods and new areas in

<sup>3</sup> Adapted from Headley, Madge, "Housing," (Woofter, T. J. Jr. and Associates, *Negro Problems in Cities*, Garden City, N. Y., Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1928), pp. 115-170. Table XXIX, p. 139.

Table XVI.<sup>4</sup> Home Ownership, Fifteen Cities\*

City	Total Number		Colored Homes Number Owned		Per Cent Owned		All Homes Per Cent Owned		Change
	1920	1910	1920	1910	1920	1910	1920	1910	
Philadelphia.....	30,995	18,095	3,778	905	12.2	5.0	7.2	39.5	26.6
New York.....	36,412	22,452	1,163	545	3.2	2.5	.7	12.7	11.7
Chicago.....	25,684	10,421	1,912	662	7.4	6.3	1.1	27.0	26.2
Gary.....	1,414	†	135	†	9.5	†	†	34.8	.8
Indianapolis.....	8,754	5,818	1,525	853	17.4	14.7	2.7	34.5	33.0
Dayton.....	1,959	1,324	1,564	302	28.8	22.8	6.0	41.9	38.1
Richmond.....	13,307	10,507	2,010	1,646	15.1	15.7	-.6	25.9	24.0
Lynchburg.....	2,121	2,296	686	615	32.3	26.8	5.5	36.7	33.3
Louisville.....	12,456	10,962	1,190	708	9.6	6.5	3.1	29.8	26.6
Lexington.....	3,852	3,158	796	644	20.7	20.4	.3	32.2	29.7
Memphis.....	19,132	14,878	2,867	1,672	15.0	11.2	3.8	28.9	25.2
Knoxville.....	2,698	1,835	722	324	26.8	17.7	9.1	40.4	37.7
New Orleans.....	24,942	22,064	2,103	2,438	8.4	11.0	-2.6	23.1	23.1
Charleston.....	9,858	9,387	1,016	836	10.3	8.9	1.4	20.2	17.6
Winston-Salem.....	4,763	†	820	†	17.2	†	....	29.8	....

\* Data from the Federal Census. Includes less than 1 per cent other colored than Negro.

† Not shown by color in 1910.

Memphis and in other cities. As old areas of Negro residence are encroached upon by the expansion of the business district, the thriftier Negroes move out and try to buy rather than search for new places to rent.

Home buying is difficult, it is pointed out, for any class of wage earners in New York City because of the high value of land and the tenement house development. Yet individual Negroes have bought some property in New York City since 1920, and there are several cases of cooperative buying of apartment houses. The Rockefeller project, the Paul Laurence Dunbar Garden Apartments, is the best known, but not the only one, of the latter. It is estimated that Negroes own over \$2,000,000 worth of property in Harlem. There are several blocks, notably the ones in 139th Street and 138th Street, where high-grade one-family dwellings are owned by their Negro occupants. Brooklyn, the Bronx, and especially Queens Borough, show a higher percentage of owned homes than does Manhattan, indicating again that Negroes, like other people who move to outlying sections, are more likely to be home owners than those who remain near the center of the city.

Table XVII.

Negro Home Ownership in Five Boroughs New York City,  
1920<sup>5</sup>

Borough	Total homes	Owned homes	Per cent owned
Brooklyn .....	7,791	477	6.1
Bronx .....	975	76	7.8
Manhattan .....	26,156	184	.7
Queens .....	1,173	370	31.5
Richmond .....	317	56	17.9
Total City .....	36,412	1,163	3.2

In Chicago the percentage of homes owned is much greater in the outlying wards where Negroes have gone than in the second and third wards where the bulk of the Negroes still remained in 1920.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 141.

Table XVIII.

Negro Home Ownership in Seven Wards, Chicago, 1920<sup>6</sup>

<i>Ward</i>	<i>Total homes</i>	<i>Owned homes</i>	<i>Per cent owned</i>
Two .....	10,714	558	5.2
Three .....	4,369	346	7.9
Six .....	1,463	149	10.2
Fourteen .....	1,744	69	4.0
Thirty .....	1,944	106	5.5
Thirty-one .....	1,061	209	19.7
Thirty-two .....	399	189	47.4
Total City .....	25,684	1,912	7.4

"Ward thirty-two includes the colony in Morgan Park, which is made up of families with a keen home-owning desire, progressive ideals and civic pride, and who are actively working to obtain municipal improvements in sewers, paving, and water supply."<sup>7</sup>

However, since 1920 in both North and South there has been a tremendous increase in the amount of city properties owned by Negroes. Reports from Georgia, North Carolina, and Virginia show losses in farm properties owned by Negroes compensated by increases in the acquisition of city property. In North Carolina, Negroes in 1928 owned 62,009 city lots as compared with

Table XIX.

## Value of City Property, 1923 and 1928, Georgia, North Carolina and Virginia

<i>State</i>	<i>Value</i>		<i>Increase</i>	
	<i>1923</i>	<i>1928</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Per Cent</i>
Georgia.....	\$20,179,456	\$24,726,311	\$ 4,546,846	22.5
North Carolina..	30,332,118	46,301,013	15,968,895	52.6
Virginia.....	20,065,409*	29,452,629	9,387,220	46.6

\* For year 1922.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 142. Data from the Federal Census.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 143.

46,065 in 1923. The value of city properties owned by Negroes in 1928 as compared with 1923 for the States of Georgia, North Carolina, and Virginia is shown in Table XIX.<sup>8</sup>

The relationship between migration and the ownership of home sites is becoming more and more apparent. A current study of the Negro in New Jersey is showing that the concentration of migrant Negro groups in certain areas was due to the activity of certain real estate companies in selling northern properties to southern Negroes.<sup>9</sup> Thus, the Negro colony in Mizpah, Cumberland County, is largely composed of Negroes who formerly lived in Arkansas, Tennessee, and Georgia. In Gloucester County, New Jersey, there are other Negro settlements. The lots were sold to Negro families on the proverbial shoe string, while a cooperating lumber dealer furnished materials for building on equally low terms. All of these communities lack modern improvements and represent the shifting scenes in this problem of home ownership.

Special local studies offer figures on the extent and character of ownership in a number of cities, North and South. The tax assessor's records for Albany, New York, showed Negro property values ranging from \$700 to \$8,000, with an aggregate value of \$225,000. In a total of 255 houses, 65 were owned.<sup>10</sup> Elizabeth Hughes found 11 per cent of the Negro small-wage earners in Chicago as compared with 17 per cent of the native whites owning their homes. There were no Mexican home owners.<sup>11</sup> "Families have found," she says, "that only by purchasing a home could they be at all assured of a place in which to live at a cost which would not be considerably beyond their control or calculation." In Columbus, Ohio, 175 of 684 households, about a fourth, owned their homes.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>8</sup> See Work, Monroe N., Editor, *The Negro Year Book*, Tuskegee, Ala., 1931-1932, pp. 118-119.

<sup>9</sup> *Survey of Negro Life in New Jersey*, Interracial Committee, New Jersey Conference of Social Work. (Final report will be ready in 1932.)

<sup>10</sup> Reid, Ira De A., *The Negro Population of Albany, N. Y.*, New York, National Urban League, 1928.

<sup>11</sup> Hughes, Elizabeth A., *Living Conditions for Small-Wage Earners in Chicago*, Bureau of Social Surveys, Chicago Department of Public Welfare, 1925.

<sup>12</sup> Mark, Mary Louise, *Negroes in Columbus (Ohio)*, (Section on Housing Conditions), Department of Sociology, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio State University Press, 1928.

The Mayor's Interracial Committee of Detroit found 312 owners in 1,000 homes studied. That there were recent purchases was indicated in the fact that only 81 of these 312 owned these homes clear. The average value of 255 of these buildings was \$5,323, and values ranged from \$500 to \$20,000.<sup>13</sup>

In Philadelphia in 1920, 3,278, or 10 per cent, of 30,995 Negro families owned homes; an intimate study by the Department of Public Welfare in 1927 gave 15 per cent owners, and 11 per cent in Pittsburgh. The former city had 33 Negro building and loan associations, while there was none in Pittsburgh.<sup>14</sup>

### Southern Cities

The extent of property ownership by Negroes has, in the past, been greater in the South than in the North. The largest amount of ownership is found in West Virginia. Charleston has 45.8 per cent owners with an aggregate valuation of \$1,237,600.<sup>15</sup> In Beckley 95 per cent of the Negro residents own their homes.<sup>16</sup>

In Dallas, Texas,<sup>17</sup> about 30 per cent of the homes were owned, and in Richmond, Virginia, about 39 per cent.<sup>18</sup> In one ward Negroes owned property valued at \$828,980. In Washington, D. C., Negroes have made a special point of ownership although property values are high. Among 545 homes studied, 46.5 per cent were owners.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>13</sup> *The Negro in Detroit* (Section V, "Housing"), Prepared for the Mayor's Interracial Committee, Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research, Inc., 1926. (Mimeographed.)

<sup>14</sup> Washington, Forrester B., *Negro Survey of Pennsylvania*, Department of Welfare, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, 1927.

<sup>15</sup> *The Negro in West Virginia, "Housing Conditions"*—A Survey of Negro Population of Charleston, West Virginia, Report of the Bureau of Negro Welfare and Statistics, Charleston, West Virginia, 1921-1922. (T. Edward Hill, Director.)

<sup>16</sup> *A Survey of Negro Housing and Home Ownership of Beckley, West Virginia*, made by Professor W. C. Matney of Bluefield Institute, May, 1928, under the auspices of the Bureau of Negro Welfare and Statistics, Charleston, West Virginia, (J. W. Robinson, Director.)

<sup>17</sup> *A Survey of Negro Housing in Dallas, Texas*, The Dallas Committee on Interracial Cooperation, Civic Federation of Dallas, 1924-1925. (Manuscript.)

<sup>18</sup> Knight, Charles Louis, *Negro Housing in Certain Virginia Cities*, (Richmond, Lynchburg and Charlottesville), (University of Virginia, Phelps-Stokes Fellowship Paper No. 8) Richmond, The William Byrd Press, 1927.

<sup>19</sup> Jones, William Henry, *The Housing of Negroes in Washington, D. C.*, Washington, Howard University Press, 1929.

A new habit with regard to home ownership is reported from New Orleans, and a marked increase has been noted. One builder opened a Negro addition, selling exclusively to Negroes on low terms, and has been marvelously successful. In some cities elaborate homes have been built by Negroes of means.

The influence of home ownership is readily observed in the care and attractiveness of property, its state of repair, site, and gradually increasing value. Corson found twice as many owners as renters in Richmond, Virginia, in locations with good drainage, and the Civic Federation of Dallas, Texas, noted nearly four times as many owned as rented homes falling in Class "A," and about the same disproportion in favor of home owners in the number of uninhabitable dwellings.

### Home Ownership and Family Stability

A most significant study is that of E. Franklin Frazier dealing with the extent to which the Negro in Chicago was able to achieve a relatively stable and permanent family life.<sup>20</sup> One index employed was that of home ownership. He observed:

"Nothing showed so vividly as the progressive stabilization of Negro family life in the seven zones<sup>21</sup> of the community as the increase in home ownership for the successive areas. Although in 1920 less than one Negro family out of every fourteen owned its home in Chicago, from the point of view of the distribution of home ownership in the Negro community, this was true only of the families in the fourth zone or the center of the com-

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<sup>20</sup> Frazier, E. Franklin, *The Negro Family in Chicago*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1932, pp. 128-135.

<sup>21</sup> The Negro population on the South Side extends from Twelfth Street to Seventy-first Street and is confined mainly between Wentworth Avenue on the west and Cottage Grove Avenue and the Lake on the east. Because of the size of the census tracts it has not been possible to mark off areas of equal length, although they are approximately a mile in their southern and northern extension. The results of the calculation of the percentage of Negroes in each occupational class are given for males and females. . . . It has also been possible to calculate the percentage of women employed and the percentage of families owning their homes for these areas. The first and second areas extend for a distance of ten blocks each, from Twelfth to Twenty-second Street and from Twenty-second to Thirty-second Street. The next area extends from Thirty-second to Thirty-ninth Street, a distance of only seven blocks, while the next three areas extend for a distance of eight blocks each. While the last area extends from Sixty-third to Sixty-seventh Street for the distribution of the occupational classes, in the case of home ownership it has been possible to calculate the percentage for eight blocks, or to Seventy-first Street.

munity. The three zones north and south of this area varied considerably in respect to home ownership. In the first zone, where there was considerable crowding\* of the poorer migrant families from the South in the lowest type of houses† in which Negroes lived, there was no home ownership. Descriptions of the dwellings at the time showed that:

' . . . Most of these dwellings were frail, flimsy, tottering, unkempt and some of them literally falling apart. Little repairing is done from year to year. Consequently their state grows progressively worse, and they are now even less habitable than when the surveys quoted at the beginning of this section were made. The surroundings in these localities were in a condition of extreme neglect, with little apparent effort to observe the laws of sanitation. Streets, alleys, and vacant lots contained garbage, rubbish, and litter of all kinds. It is difficult to enforce health regulations.'

"In the next zone, where white people still lived in the large, well-built, and ornate dwellings on the once fashionable residential streets—Michigan, Indiana, and Prairie Avenues—Negro families had filtered in and occupied the hundreds of old houses that surrounded the white homes.‡ Only about one Negro family out of every hundred was living in its own home. The forty-six families who owned their homes represented a small group of thrifty and rising families in the Negro population. . . .

"Home ownership in the third zone showed a decided increase, for about one Negro family out of every sixteen owned its home. On the whole the houses in this area showed age and were rapidly deteriorating. But, on Grand Boulevard and South Park Avenue, Negroes of the professional and business classes had bought the substantial old family residences that had been abandoned by whites. There were other neighborhoods of Negro property owners, belonging chiefly to the upper classes, who attempted to resist the disorganization that characterized this area.

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\* "Zone 1 showed a higher average number of families and persons per dwelling than any zone in the South Side community. . . ."

† ". . . Concerning the classification of houses inhabited by Negroes, the report" (The Negro in Chicago, by the Chicago Commission on Race Relations, published in 1922, at page 186) "gave the following: 'A rough classification of Negro housing according to types, ranging from the best, designated as "Type A," to the poorest, designated as "Type D," was made by the Commission on the basis of a block survey comprising 238 blocks, covering all the main areas of Negro residences and data concerning 274 families, scattered through 238 blocks, one or two to a block, whose histories and housing experiences were intensively studied by the Commission's investigators. Approximately 5 per cent of Chicago's Negro population live in "Type A" houses, 10 per cent in "Type B," 40 per cent in "Type C," and 45 per cent in the poorest, "Type D."'"

‡ "Many of the homes in this area were described as follows: 'In a large number of buildings families were obliged to use common toilets located in halls or backyards. The dwellings were out of repair in some respects in nearly every instance. Defects of this kind were often in the plumbing. Leaky toilets or water pipes were common complaints. Some toilets did not flush. Some sinks were leaky, as were some of the roofs.'"

"The slight increase in home ownership in the next zone indicated the same tendency of the upper levels of the Negro population and more stable families to seek a congenial environment. Representative of this group was the family of a physician who came from a settlement of free mulattoes in one of the northern States. This physician's paternal grandfather was among those free mulattoes who left the State of North Carolina early in the nineteenth century, when restrictive legislation was passed against this group and helped to establish this settlement. Soon after this physician began the practice of medicine in Chicago he bought a home in Ravenswood, but later moved to the South Side. He said:

"The only reason that I moved away from there—my children were getting up where they would be eight or nine years of age and we had an idea we wanted them to meet with children of their own race whom they would be associated with in the future."

"His experience on the South Side was typical of the efforts of the upper classes to maintain the character of their neighborhoods in harmony with their standards of living.

". . . In the sixth zone, between Garfield Boulevard and Sixty-third Street, where 857 Negro families were living in 1920, ninety-nine families owned their homes. The proportion of families owning their homes in this area was nearly 50 per cent higher than the average for the entire Negro population in the city. Home ownership in this zone was not evenly distributed, for the general character of this area was affected by railroad lines on the west and south. The families that found their way into the areas bordering the railroad property were on a lower level of culture than those that have moved into the more desirable sections. On the whole, the increase in home ownership in this zone was due to the presence of the more industrious and stable families who were distinguished from the mass of the Negro population. There was a relatively large percentage of skilled laborers and a smaller percentage of the women employed than in any other zone except the seventh. Moreover, this area had a somewhat larger percentage of the professional classes than any of the areas north of this zone. One of the first families of the professional class to move into the most desirable section of this zone was a dentist of national renown, who was married to a woman who could boast of six generations of free ancestry. Members of her immediate family had distinguished themselves, while others had intermarried with some of the most successful Negro families in the country. Since 1920, members of the professional classes and those possessing some background of culture have continued to move into this section. At the same time, as this area has become more completely a Negro section, less desirable families have settled here and forced the older inhabitants to look elsewhere for a congenial environment.

"The better-class families have been seeking better neighborhoods in the seventh zone beyond Sixty-third Street. In the section of this zone which forms a part of Woodlawn there has been for many years a small group of Negro families who represented the most stable elements in the Negro popu-

lation. § In 1920, 30 per cent of these families, some of whom were of the professional classes, owned their homes. Many of these houses were single-family residences. Eight of the twenty families that had moved beyond Sixty-seventh Street were also home owners. . . ." <sup>22</sup>

### Individual Home Building on Small Capital

The human story of individual home buying by one of the Negro families in a southern city is given in the following document:<sup>23</sup>

Here's the situation: When I decided to try and build, I bought a lot of good old lumber and started storing it up. It was a struggle for me, for I was renting and had to pay \$16.00 a month for rent; then I had my mother and my sister's children with me, and of course their father was mighty nice and helped them a lot, but you know how it is with children; he would send them a pair of shoes, but the upkeep of those shoes would be on me and you know how much fixing it takes to keep children's shoes in good shape. Of course it was like that in all of their clothes and I had to feed them too. But I tried to save a little, and as soon as I got together a few things I began working. First, I built up the piers, and they stayed there so long that sometimes I would come back in the morning and they would be torn down by people who wanted to go through. You see this was a vacant lot and there was a wagon road through here and people used to pass all the time. They would just pull them down and go through.

Well, I had a little Christmas savings and we had bought up some good lumber, so I decided to make a little start. I just meant to put up two little rooms and a shed on the back of the lot and then build the house I wanted in the front as I got the money. I went to a lumber yard and outlined everything to them and told them as soon as I got the Christmas savings in November I would pay them if they would let me have the lumber at that time. I got the lumber, and the man I got to frame it up for me said since I had so much lumber it would be cheaper to just build the kind of house I wanted at once, so we started. After I framed it up, the money ran out and I had to let it stand for five or six months before I could get a top on it. When I was working on the house I had a regular job, and I would get up at four o'clock in the morning and work on it until seven, then go home to breakfast and to work; I would come from work and come right back over here and work until dark; I wouldn't even stop to eat when I got

§ "Other settlements of Negroes showed variations in home ownership that reflected the general culture of these areas. In Roseland, where there was a stable family life, forty-seven of the sixty families owned their homes. Seventy-three per cent of the Negro families in Morgan Park were home owners, and in Englewood 25 per cent of the families owned their homes. On the Near West Side only 3 per cent of the families were home owners, while in the settlement on the Near North Side there were no home owners. . . ." p. 135.

<sup>22</sup> Frazier, E. Franklin, *The Negro Family in Chicago*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1932.

<sup>23</sup> From an unpublished Study in the Department of Social Science, Fisk University.

home from work, and I guess that was one of the reasons my health failed. People would pass by and wonder why I did not finish the house; I thought that was a silly thing for them to ask because they ought to have known that if I had had the money I would have finished it. They said it would rot down before I got through, but I just kept going, and as soon as I would get a little ahead I would get something else to put on it and work a little more. I got a friend to speak to a man for some shingles for me and they cost me \$140.00; after I got that, I saved up a little more and got men to put the top on. Then I decided that that sixteen dollars we were paying for rent would help us out a lot, so we decided to move on up. It was real warm and we knew we would not take cold and the roof would keep the rain out. When we moved in we didn't have any doors or windows, but we soon saved enough to get some outside doors, and finally we got enough to get plastering to fix two rooms and we got that done just before Christmas. I was working steady then, but it was a hard pull because I had so much on me. We didn't buy so much old lumber. I couldn't keep up with the bills or the payments either. You see they were so scattering; we started buying about five years ago.

I chose this neighborhood because I thought it was going to grow up. It was mostly all vacant then—just commons around here, and the folks give me a bad go when I was building it. They all said it would rot down before I finished it. Most people don't have the trouble I did; they just buy it and have to meet monthly notes themselves and they don't know anything of the struggle of building it bit by bit themselves as we did.

This is not the first home I had or, rather, it isn't the first one I bargained for. I bargained to buy a home in Atlanta, and I didn't have any money to send back when I moved here, so I just gave it up. But I'll tell you just what caused me to start buying out here. When we first came to Nashville, we just rented a room with Mr. —— (on Fisk campus), and we were light housekeeping there, but my wife got tired of that and she wanted to housekeep for herself; so I told her to go ahead and find the kind of house she wanted and we would rent it. She did find a house and we decided to take it; then she went downtown and bought some things and fixed it up. You know I am this sort of a man—if I live in a place, I believe in keeping it clean and doing little things to keep it looking nice around the yard and house, no matter whose house it is; so we'd get those places and clean up and make the yard look good, and just as soon as we got it looking to suit us, some one would come along and want to buy it and we'd have to move. Before we fixed it up, nobody would notice it, but just as soon as we got it fixed, here they'd come wanting it and it just kept us moving all the time. You know that makes a bad impression on our friends, and especially on the folks back home. I could make all sorts of explanations to prove that it wasn't our fault that we had to move so much, but you know folks would never believe that the reason we gave would be the real one; they'd just think that we had a bad break here or something and wasn't doing no good; so I just wanted to be stationary so that when I write to my folks they could continue to write me at that address and not be changing every year or two. The last time I had to move, it was three or four months before I found a

house that was decent. Of course you know you can always find some kind of a house, but I wanted a decent house in a decent neighborhood; so I just decided that I would build my little shack in the back of the yard, but I was making good money then, and when my friend said it would be cheaper to build the kind of house I wanted I went on with it, and where I had enough to build the little house I planned at first, after I decided to go on with the permanent house, it took all of the money to get the frame up.

I wouldn't sell it for less than \$6,500 now, and I would have to have most of that cash to let it go for that now. Even if I could get my price for it, I imagine I would be jealous of the person who bought it. I have sacrificed too much to get it in the first place and I have done too much of the work myself; then I like this spot for a home, but my wife has been sick so much and I have had so much sickness myself and work has been so scarce that I just don't know what to do.

### General Observations on Negro Home Ownership

Summarizing the tendencies in Negro home ownership, these items may be noted:

1. Home buying in northern cities has about doubled since 1920.
2. In certain cities of the South the increase in Negro home buying has been more rapid than the increase for the cities as a whole.
3. In northern cities there has been a rapid increase in home buying, but the dwellings purchased by Negroes have been, in large part, old and difficult to keep in repair.
4. Special difficulties are encountered in financing of Negro homes.
5. New housing developments are not freely open to Negroes, either in the North or South, except where they are sponsored by Negroes, or exclusively for them.
6. When these developments are sponsored by Negroes, the lack of capital, the difficulty of securing municipal improvements, and the enforced removal from proximity to work render them too hazardous to encourage full Negro financial support.

## CHAPTER V

### FINANCING OF NEGRO HOME BUYING

Home buying by Negroes is controlled by their level of income, by factors inherent in the types of property and neighborhoods available, and by their understanding of what constitutes sound investment in property. Few Negro prospective buyers are able to pay cash, and thus it becomes necessary to borrow. Public opinion has not strongly favored purchases in the so-called "white" residence areas. Moreover, new developments, lacking in municipal improvements, are not encouraging for loans. The area in which loans can be made most freely, from the point of view of public opinion, is, ironically enough, the area most open to influences which make the financing of properties within it a speculation.

"An important factor in the housing problem is the low security rating given by real estate loan concerns to property tenanted by Negroes. Because of this Negroes are charged more than white people for loans, find it more difficult to secure them, and thus are greatly handicapped in efforts to buy or improve property. . . .

"When districts become exclusively Negro this reluctance to invest or to lend invariably appears. If there are sufficient Negroes with money to create a market, the loss is somewhat relieved. Yet, deprived of the usual facilities for purchasing a home, they cannot relieve their housing shortage and are forced to seek houses in unfriendly neighborhoods.

"The factors are similar to those in depreciation, often based on prejudices and erroneous beliefs concerning Negroes. Whatever depreciates real estate necessarily depresses its security value—whether the cause be fact or opinion. A —— bank had difficulty in selling Negro loans to white people because they say 'they don't keep up the property; they let it deteriorate; they don't improve it.'"<sup>1</sup>

#### The Elements of Risk in Financing Negro Properties

The age of the houses in the Negro residence areas, and the general aspect of deterioration, along with the fact that few new houses are built, help to explain the reluctance of banks and financial agencies to make investments in these sections.

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<sup>1</sup> The Chicago Commission on Race Relations, *The Negro in Chicago*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1922, pp. 215-216.

"The increase in buying in northern cities started at a time when loan money was in demand and rates high. Negroes bought old properties, and had great difficulty in getting mortgage money, even at advanced rates, partly because of the depreciated values of the houses they purchased and partly because of prejudice against a new type of clients. Mortgage firms willing to take the paper found difficulty in selling it. . ."<sup>2</sup>

Not only are the older areas prohibitive of loans but most of the concerns believe that the sales value of property in newly acquired areas is lowered with Negro residence. Where there is little likelihood of the neighborhood's rapidly becoming all Negro there has frequently occurred a disturbance of these values. That the values return, whether the neighborhood remains but slightly affected or changes complexion entirely, is not of great importance to investors who seek immediate and obvious security for their investments.

Where Negro property of any sort is concerned, it is usually felt that the buying market is restricted to Negroes. This is sometimes true. From the point of view of the investor, the range of bargaining is narrowed and profits limited to what this group is able or willing to pay. It has seldom been observed that they pay less, but this does not affect the theory, which is reasonable. There are other obvious factors affecting the value of Negro properties. They almost never lie in the path of residential development, and thus the chances for enhancement of values are reduced.

### Mortgages on Negro Property

The problem of loans for Negroes, on both first and second mortgages, is bound up with the economics of the situation.<sup>3</sup> Institutions, banks and insurance companies, which are the largest takers of mortgage loans, are not interested in small loans, and the Negro purchaser's equity is, as a rule, too small to induce a loan of reasonable size at a reasonable rate of interest. Their income is low, as has been pointed out in another section, their securities and savings meager, and their chances of meeting regular monthly payments contingent upon their status as marginal workers. Where loans are made to them at all, it is regarded as justification

<sup>2</sup> Headley, Madge, "Housing," (Woofter, T. J. Jr. and Associates, *Negro Problems in Cities*, Garden City, N. Y., Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1928), pp. 143-144.

<sup>3</sup> From a memorandum prepared by L. D. Milton, Vice President and Cashier of the Citizens Trust Company, Atlanta, Georgia.

that the interest and fees should be made large enough to give a measure of insurance against the risks involved. Some banks thus draw lines excluding Negro loans and Negro property completely. The discrimination is often, however, more economic than real. Financial institutions feel it necessary to keep their assets in such shape as to rehandle them with other financial institutions.<sup>4</sup> This desire to standardize investments in mortgage loans undoubtedly limits the amounts that can be advanced to Negroes for home ownership and home building.

The Columbus study, which has been cited before, included inquiries among real estate men:

"The opinion seems to be almost unanimous among white men who deal in residential property that the coming of Negroes into a white neighborhood lowers the sale value of homes in that district. A man representing a building and loan company says that the Negroes as a race do not keep their property up and so they soon make a community undesirable for a good class of white people. He cites the principal Negro districts in the city as evidence. Knowing what the effect will be, many whites try to sell their homes as soon as Negroes move into the neighborhood, thus throwing many properties on the market and lowering the sale value.

"Another man who has done considerable business with the Negroes says the effect of Negroes' coming into a community depends upon conditions already existing in the community. If the section is a first-class white neighborhood, and there is little likelihood of its becoming a distinctly Negro neighborhood, property values go down. But if the neighborhood is already in a run down condition the coming of colored people may increase the values. This, he says, was true north of Mt. Vernon Avenue near Galloway Avenue. The pressure of so many Negroes needing homes and their eagerness to go into the district caused prices to rise. This man does not think the Negroes have had any effect upon property values in the West Goodale Street district or in the South Side district. In those districts property values had already depreciated somewhat with the coming of the foreigner.

"A building and loan official says that the immediate effect is always depreciation in value of property because the presence of Negroes in any neighborhood makes it less desirable for whites. If, however, the property is not already too high for the average Negro to purchase, the number of Negro prospective buyers tends to increase the prices after the first period of depreciation. . . ."<sup>5</sup>

Thus, loans for such types of prospective home owners fall to private funds, the cost of which is high because of the greater risks

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup>Mark, Mary Louise, *Negroes in Columbus (Ohio)*, (Section on Housing Conditions), Department of Sociology, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio State University Press, 1928.

generally sustained by the private lender. These limitations, it would seem, while rigid and impersonal, are not fundamentally racial, although they bear down hardest upon Negroes because of their circumstances. Otherwise it is possible for Negroes to borrow money, legitimately, on mortgages.

"The largest savings bank here makes almost daily advances of this kind, and our life insurance companies take another large block. The president of the Georgia Savings Bank advised me today that fully 30 per cent or more than two million dollars in loans is on Negro property. There is no way of estimating how much private money is loaned, but I do know definitely that private sources are carrying tremendous amounts. I do not know of a single deserving instance even during the present disturbed economic conditions where it was impossible for a Negro with a business proposition to obtain a loan. I do admit, however, that some organizations will make such loans under no circumstance, probably because of the class risk that I have outlined above.

"As peculiar as it might seem, our Negroes with the largest incomes are usually the poorest mortgage risks. Conversation with heads of financial institutions here brings almost unanimous opinion that the servant who buys a small piece of realty, requires a small mortgage, and who usually applies a substantial cash payment to his purchase is the best type of risk. Our own experience is just as conclusive."<sup>6</sup>

This last observation points to a situation which is the very opposite of the fairly general belief regarding Negro standards of living. Their scale of living, far from being uniformly lower than the white, is, ironically enough, as high or higher, without the means of supporting it. This is observed by the Negro banker who remarked:

"For ourselves as Negroes, it is indeed unfortunate that we live in a country of so much progress. Our wants almost always exceed our income, and it is difficult to restrict the desire to buy far beyond our means to repay. In home ownership, the average Negro is likely to attempt the purchase of a piece of realty far beyond his ability to pay without at the same time restricting his purchases of luxuries, principally automobiles, which he sees on all hands."<sup>7</sup>

The problem of financing is further defined by J. C. Napier, Cashier of the Citizens Savings Bank of Nashville, Tennessee:

"As to the securing of mortgages, I think that Negroes applying for loans or first mortgages on their property in this community are generally accommodated without reference to their race or color, provided their applica-

<sup>6</sup> From a memorandum prepared by L. D. Milton, Vice President and Cashier of the Citizens Trust Company, Atlanta, Georgia.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

tion for such a loan is based upon a reasonable valuation of their property. The general rule is for the financier to grant such a loan or fix the mortgage, based upon a 50 per cent valuation of the property of the borrower.

"The practice in this community seems to be contrary to granting or encouraging second mortgages. The belief, however, is prevalent that there is a rule among the real estate dealers in this community to discourage or prohibit the purchase of property by colored people in white neighborhoods. . . ."\*

There are several methods of purchase available for Negro buyers. Three of the chief methods are through straight mortgages, through building and loan associations, and by the contract or "pay like rent" plan. Negroes do some buying for cash outright, but that method is and must continue to be rare in cities where property values are high. Investigators found that the placing of first mortgage loans on city property is not particularly difficult, especially when there is available a surplus of loan funds, but Negroes often pay more than the normal rate of interest, because of the conditions mentioned above. Although conditions have improved as prejudice diminished before business considerations, Negroes still have to pay more for loans than do white buyers. The second mortgage money comes so dear because of the lack of organization in that field, Miss Headley thinks, rather than because of prejudice, and the high rates (12 to 20 per cent including various extra charges) also affect white buyers of "cheap" property.

Negro buyers fare better in communities where building and loan associations are prominent in the real estate field. Many communities have thriving Negro associations (Philadelphia had thirty-six in 1925), and white associations often welcome Negro clients. Building and loan associations are carefully regulated by law in most states and offer protection to the lender and borrower alike. A white company in Lexington, Kentucky, has had Negro clients almost since its inception and in twenty years had never lost a dollar.

Contract buying involves a small initial payment and small monthly payments "like rent." Its defect is that it allows exploitation and that special clauses may be inserted which make it easy to claim a default whereby the buyer loses all that has been paid in. The printed forms of contract to sell that are used are

\* From a memorandum prepared by J. C. Napier, Cashier of the Citizens Savings Bank and Trust Company, Nashville, Tennessee.

devised to protect the vendor; there is no record of purchase; and additional mortgages may be put on by the vendor after payments have started.

"However, protection is necessary for the vendor, since the cash payment is low and an equity is earned only after thirty to forty monthly payments. . . .

"Selling under contract-lease is highly speculative, and is carried on through active advertising and soliciting campaigns in which glowing promises are made. Buyers are tempted to undertake a burden of payments extending over from ten to fifteen years, with constant danger of loss through violation of clauses in the lease contract, or through default."<sup>9</sup>

In this matter of buying, virtually the same situation exists as in the case of rents. They pay more. The present systems, moreover, permit exploitation. Charles S. Duke of Chicago states:

"Recent investigations in Chicago disclose the fact that banks, white and black, charge a commission of from 6 to 15 per cent on colored loans and 7 per cent interest. Whites secure first mortgages for 3 to 6 per cent commission and 2 to 6 per cent interest. Negroes pay from 15 per cent to 35 per cent commission and 6 per cent interest. Mortgage houses find it exceedingly difficult to sell mortgage paper upon Negro property, and institutions that handle such paper are, at the present time, overstocked. Even Negro investors refuse to purchase mortgage paper upon residences occupied by members of their own race. In fact, colored investors, in many instances, have manifested about as much narrowness in this regard as white investors."<sup>10</sup>

The need of a central appraisal bureau has been felt for communities in which small-wage earners are forced into competitive buying as a means of promoting home ownership. This emphasizes all the more the plight of the prospective Negro buyer. For the white buyer is most likely to have larger funds, but what is still more important, an unlimited field from which to make a selection of a home. This fact tends to place a limitation of a sort upon prices. The narrowly restricted range of Negro residence areas permits extravagant and not infrequently disastrously excessive prices. He must choose between a good location excessively priced, and a reasonable price in a section where no one desires to reside.

Impersonal and racial factors in the situation are not all. The

<sup>9</sup> Headley, Madge, "Housing," (Woofter, T. J. Jr. and Associates, *Negro Problems in Cities*, Garden City, N. Y., Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1928), p. 149.

<sup>10</sup> From a memorandum prepared by Charles S. Duke, Architectural and Structural Engineer, 184 West Washington Street, Chicago, Illinois.

Negro home purchaser, coming to the market, especially in the cities of the North, is unacquainted with actual risks of buying. As John E. Nail points out, he is "misdirected in his investment by those who are incompetent to advise and direct. He buys on short margin, and in times of pressure his source of employment being uncertain, he faces criticism and the ultimate loss of his home and investment."

In some southern cities it has been possible, through friendly or dependent relations with white families, to get their aid in securing easier terms on moderate homes, and, too, there has been some help from the small Negro businesses which have been, as a matter of fact, established in protest against the difficulty of getting loans on moderate terms from white banks. Particular inquiries were made on this point in several southern cities. An example of an illuminating sort is in the following account which concerns Houston, Texas:

"As to buying of homes, they usually buy in certain additions; Forest Homes in the Third ward and Pine Crest in the Fifth ward are some of the better additions. The price of the homes in these additions ranges from \$2,600 to \$4,000, and averages around \$3,100 or \$3,200. The number of rooms ranges from 4 to 6. Most of them are five-room houses. They pay \$200 to \$250 down and the rest in monthly instalments. The monthly payments average around \$30. They are supposed to pay 10 per cent down, but we very seldom get it. None of the real estate agents stick to that. They take a small down payment and then raise the monthly payments to take care of it. They charge a high interest, and the client doesn't usually understand that that is to be added. I have a client now who was buying a house and he really paid 20 per cent interest on his money. The interest payments were running to 14 and 15 per cent then and that was on the face of the note when they had already deducted 5 per cent when they made the note and had not given him the money until six months later; so, in addition to all of this interest, he paid it for six months when he did not have use of the money. We do not have any building and loan associations at all catering to colored. The Houston Building and Loan Company and the National Bond and Mortgage companies are the only ones who did lend to colored, and they do not do it any more. . . .

"There is another class of people buying out six or eight miles from town. There is an acreage division out there which they sell in 1-acre tracts, and a good many people have gone out there. Then we have Independence Heights and Sunnyside. The lots out there range from \$220 to \$500 each. They are not additions in the true sense of the word, for there has been no improvement made, and the people who buy do so hoping to go out there and live, but they have no means to get out there, and no way to get into town to their work if they move out. The type of people who buy have

their work in town and do not make enough to own and run a car, but they hear the cheap prices quoted and jump at it. The Wright Land Company started the Acreage addition and Embry and Gillette the Forest Homes. I think Burke started the Pine Crest addition. These outer additions have no sewerage; Independence Heights has little sewerage, and what it has is not at all adequate. Sunnyside and Acreage have no gas or water, except wells. It is just land out in the country. Until recently there were no streets out there. They are very slow about paving colored streets all over the city.”<sup>11</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

“In the west end it is hard to get finances for either white or colored, but in this section, where better classes live, there is no trouble in getting finance at all. . . . Financing is not so difficult in the industrial suburb where Negroes work. It is a regular labor town, and if you have an occupation they don't pay so much attention to your color. If you can do the job, you get it. All of the industries employ colored and pay good prices. There are more Negroes employed here as mail carriers than in all of Texas combined. There are many professional men. We have 73,000 Negroes in the Metropolitan district of Houston, and the only city park for colored is in the third ward. There are 63,000 in the city proper. We have no difficulty in financing houses in the third ward on about the same terms as are available for whites. We are surrounded by whites and they have to pass through to get to town and to their subdivisions; therefore the values are most lasting and the sections better kept up. One building and loan association was very active in taking Negro loans; it represented northern capital. It is called the San Jacinto Trust Company. Its brokerage charges were usually 5 per cent, and they allowed the terms of payment to be made according to the type of home. You could make monthly payments or a term loan, but most of them used the monthly payment plan. That is usually at the rate of \$1.25 per month per \$100. On a \$2,000 loan that would be \$25 per month, including interest charges. Some arrange it at 1 per cent on ordinary loans. They have a system of 'On or before' in which you can pay on or before a certain date with a stated amount of interest. There are not very many elaborate homes in the ward, but we have modern equipment and moderate homes. The average price is about \$3,500.

“Several building companies are building for colored as little as \$100 down and \$35 per month, which is about the same amount they would have to pay for rent.

“There's an iron-clad rule among building and mortgage companies not to lend any money on unimproved streets; they must be shelled, gravelled, or permanently paved—a good thing for colored people, for they want to sell badly enough and they will work for the street improvement. The main problem here is an economic one. If a man is earning \$200 a month he can own and live in a pretty nice place, and there are hundreds of people here making that much and lots making much more.”<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Cited by Carter Wesley, Attorney and Real Estate Agent, in interview.

<sup>12</sup> Cited by Mr. Oscar Pope, Real Estate Agent, 2618 Holman Street, Houston, Texas, in interview.

In New Orleans the financing of Negro property has been very largely in the hands of a few persons who specialize in Negro homes. They place credit terms within their reach and get, in return, a good profit from the sale.

"The usual method of buying is to get a homestead to finance the project, making a mortgage, down payment, and a note for 30, 60 and 90 days. These they can take up and extend with interest as they fall due. Unless you are going to own a number of houses there is really no advantage in owning a home here; taxes are so high, and, if you are buying, it is the heavy taxes plus the payments that are a hardship. If you are buying a \$4,000 home the payments will run around \$40 per month, and the taxes will be about \$20. Then there are water taxes and so forth, so there is no great incentive for home ownership."<sup>13</sup>

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"The usual charge in home buying is 20 per cent down payment and the rest in installments. If the house costs \$3,000 you would pay 20 per cent down and \$30 per month. There is a Jewish builder who does a lot of building for Negroes. The client pays for the labor done in building and he furnishes the material, builds the home, and then turns it over to a homestead who buys the material from him, and the buyers pay the homestead. He has financed some very good homes in this way. This means that one must have his home built for him; that is, pay for the labor and you usually have to have your lot. The building and loan agencies usually work the same way. They don't seem to have any trouble getting credit."<sup>14</sup>

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"Most of the homes are bought through the homestead plan by poor colored and whites. You buy the lot, they build and supervise the building and lend you money and let you pay it back on a monthly basis like rent, with interest of 7½ to 8½ per cent. There are some lumber companies that will furnish you lumber and take your note, but 90 per cent of the poor buy from the homesteads. I presume that the colored have about the same rates as the whites. . . ."<sup>15</sup>

When homes are bought through the homestead plan the prospective home owner buys the lot and the builder loans money for the building and supervises the construction, allowing the client to pay back the amount like rent, over a long period. One such builder explained to an investigator that there must be taken into account, in the cost, a certain "moral risk." "It is thought," he added, "that the Negro will pay today and won't pay tomorrow;

<sup>13</sup> Cited by the Reverend N. A. Holmes, 2307 Bienville Street, New Orleans, in interview.

<sup>14</sup> Cited by Mrs. W. O. Sazon, Standard Life Insurance Company, New Orleans, in interview.

<sup>15</sup> Cited by Dr. J. A. Hardin, 1925 N. Rocheblave Street, New Orleans, in interview.

he will move overnight or something, but the Negro is not a bit worse than the poor whites of the same economic class."

In Louisville, Kentucky, the most common arrangement is a down payment of 10 to 20 per cent and monthly payments averaging about 1 per cent of the value of the property. Many of the homes have first and second mortgages. Consequently, when the depression was felt hardest the homes were easily lost.

There is a Negro concern, the Standard Realty Company, which has assisted Negroes in home buying in this city. Its purpose is to encourage Negroes to save and to make loans on homes. They pay 6 per cent on deposits. The regular rates of building and loan associations are charged, and they advance only 50 to 65 per cent of the total cost. Loans are limited to \$5,000.

Another successful Negro building and loan society is in Virginia, the People's Building and Loan Association Among Negroes, organized in 1889. It is one of the largest such concerns, with assets equal to the assets of all Negro building and loan associations in Virginia, and fourth in rank of all such associations, white and Negro.<sup>16</sup>

The position of Negroes in relation to the means of financing home owning is yet unfortunate. In this situation there have been several suggestions with reasonable intent, aimed at striking a balance between Negro needs and resources. Mr. John E. Nail, of New York, who as a real estate dealer and one interested in the larger welfare of the Negro population, calls attention to one potential resource which has not yet been adequately tested:

"Savings banks throughout the country carry large Negro deposits. They are not inclined to give Negroes the same mortgage accommodation that they give other racial groups.

"In the mass Negro population in America there is a great reservoir of capital that is not active in their interest. The Negro has not had the opportunity to learn the value of investments. His mass reservoir of capital should be harnessed and utilized for home financing. It is impossible for the Negro to operate financing institutions without contact and interracial cooperation.

"Title companies in the City of New York are engaged in the mortgage lending business. They make a \$10,000 loan based on a certain appraisement by an accredited appraiser, lending 60 or 65 per cent of the appraised value of the property. The \$10,000 loan is divided into certificates of \$10, \$100, \$500 and \$1,000 units and these mortgage certificates, as they are called, are sold to the general public with the company's guarantee for the payment of principal and interest.

<sup>16</sup> Davis, Don A., "Using the Building and Loan Associations," *Southern Workman*, November, 1927, Vol. 56, pp. 493-496.

"While I am one person who does not feel as white America does that it is possible for Negroes to finance and operate the things they require as a racial group without contact, I do believe, if such a reservoir of capital could be harnessed and successfully operated, it could prove to America that it is possible for them to harness and operate this capital successfully as a racial group. There would be in a short time, competing entities from other racial groups who would seek investments in the fields in which these were being made. I see no other hope for reasonable accommodation in home financing for Negroes except, perhaps, through the medium of some well intentioned or philanthropically inclined group of people of large material substance, who would draw together capital for this purpose.

"The Housing Conference should endorse the President's Home Loan Bank plan. The Negro should be given representation on the commission. A population of twelve million has interest and purchasing power that require proper appraisement, protection and development."

Dr. L. F. Burbridge, President of the Louisiana Industrial Life Insurance Company, New Orleans, Louisiana, suggests that it would be feasible in the light of consideration of a system of Federal Home Loan Banks, to admit such of the Negro Insurance Companies as have sufficient assets and a substantial rating to the privilege of borrowing from this bank on the same basis as the Building and Loan Associations. Many of these Insurance Companies, which are members of the National Negro Insurance Association, are, he feels, in position to provide acceptable security for such loans, and this arrangement, intended for relief of this type, would materially aid in the financing of Negro homes.

#### Negroes as Credit Risks

The factors which make Negroes a class risk are based upon the logic of their unfavorable circumstances. When, family for family, their record is studied, however, it does not appear to be as dismal as these circumstances should warrant. Miss Madge Headley visited a large group of bankers and brokerage real estate dealers and builders in Chicago in 1917, and again in 1928, when Negroes first began to buy and as they reached the normal termination of the extended period of payments. Of their reactions, she had this to say:

"Negroes are standing this test of borrowing for home buying, and are steadily overcoming the prejudice against lending money to them, though this is still one of the greatest obstacles to home owning. Their own financial institutions are commencing to influence loan money, but the difficulties in securing this type of small loans are still great.

"Negroes are also standing the test of payments running over a period

of ten or twelve years, and have belied their general reputation for hand-to-mouth living. In every city studied, white and colored bankers, brokers, real estate dealers and builders stated that families buying a home rarely default, except because of some disaster, or very poor judgment in buying. One dealer who had sold 700 houses in five years had had only three foreclosures, and another who had sold 900 houses had had none. There is, however, a decided tendency to get behind in payments, which makes it necessary for those who collect to be both patient and persistent in keeping them regular."<sup>17</sup>

One general study of the Negro as a credit risk has been made by Professor Paul K. Edwards, of the Department of Economics of Fisk University.<sup>18</sup> The results of his study, which covered some seventeen cities of the South and store credit as well as real estate loans, were as follows:

"Upon several occasions in the conduct of this study prominent white individuals have evidenced surprise that there is such a thing as Negro credit. As a matter of fact there are many excellent credit risks among Negroes in the urban South. The small numbers of accounts on the books of the better stores are invariably good risks. An analysis of Negro credit ratings in the *Blue Book* published annually by the Birmingham Merchants' Credit Association shows that of 114 ratings for Negro railroad laborers, 47.3 per cent were good or fair; that 54 per cent of 170 credit ratings for Negro employees of an important iron and coal company were either good or fair. A study of sections of the files of the Credit Service Exchange in Atlanta found that of 267 credit ratings for Negro common laborers, 51.3 per cent were prompt pay, and 82 per cent were either prompt or fair pay; that of 165 credit ratings for Negro skilled laborers, 50.9 per cent were prompt pay, and 85 per cent were prompt or fair pay. Finally, an analysis made of the credit standing of 500 Negroes regarding whom information was requested of the Nashville Retail Credit Bureau during several days' time by all kinds of enterprises is of interest here. Of 413 Negroes from common and semi-skilled labor families, 46.1 per cent were rated either fair or good risks by the Bureau; of 87 Negroes from skilled labor families, 49.3 per cent were rated either fair or good credit risks; of 100 Negroes from business and professional families 57 per cent were either good or fair.

"Those enterprisers interviewed in the conduct of this study who deal largely with the laboring classes of whites and Negroes reported them, in the great majority of cases, about on a par as credit risks. Real estate dealers stated almost universally that from their experience the Negro labor tenant is at least as good a risk as the white laborer. Several industrial banks and loan companies dealing with large numbers of labor families

<sup>17</sup> Headley, Madge, "Housing," (Woofter, T. J. Jr. and Associates, *Negro Problems in Cities*, Garden City, N. Y., Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1928), p. 143.

<sup>18</sup> Edwards, Paul K., *The Southern Urban Negro as a Consumer*, New York, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1932, pp. 116-119.

have found that Negro labor is as good a risk as white labor. The proprietors and managers of 'instalment credit' clothing houses interviewed have in a majority of cases discovered no appreciable difference between whites and Negroes as credit risks—or perhaps we should say collection risks—that both are bad. The business of the 'instalment credit' house is with fairly comparable groups of Negroes and whites, although even here Negroes from common and semi-skilled labor families are almost sure to make up a larger proportion of the Negro patronage than do whites of this occupation group of the total white patronage. From certain angles they find the Negro an easier subject from which to collect; from others a more difficult one. To threaten him with the law has a more immediate influence. Realizing his helplessness at the hands of the law the Negro usually will not fight back, while the white man will. . . .

"Because of the widely differing proportions of the Negro and white population in each occupation classification, in the South's large cities, it is exceedingly unfair to compare the two races as a whole as credit risks. Equitable comparisons can be made only between occupation classes. For example, a reasonable comparison would be between 75 per cent of the Negro group and the 25 per cent of the white group in common and semi-skilled labor families. Studies of the comparative percentages of the Negro and white credit customers of the better stores in each occupation class, however, show how exceedingly difficult, if not impossible it is, to make such comparisons. There are very few white common and semi-skilled labor accounts on the books of this class of store; there are more accounts with Negro families of this occupation classification than any other. Moreover, because of the small percentage of Negro laborers employed at skilled work there are very few Negro skilled labor accounts in the credit records. In Nashville in 1920 only 9.1 per cent of the male and female Negroes gainfully occupied were employed as skilled labor; 26.6 per cent of the male and female whites were in this occupation class. Unless comparisons of the labor families of the two races as credit risks are planned and executed with extreme care, therefore, they are almost sure to be largely between Negro common and semi-skilled laborers on the one hand and white skilled laborers on the other."

A principal difficulty for them seems to be that those dealers who could provide good homes at a reasonable figure consider the per capita wealth of the group, as a class, too small to insure reasonable profits. The homes required are small; the terms must be easy and extended over a long period. To make it a profitable investment there must be increased charges, and these are in part counterbalanced by the cost of collection. As a result there is usually little new construction, and buying is limited to old dwellings which no one else wants. There is, it would seem, no more clear demand for a substitute for the present conditions of private building than on the matter of homes for this class of the population.

## CHAPTER VI

### HOUSING PROJECTS FOR NEGROES

One of the first experiments in model housing for Negroes was that conducted by the Cincinnati Model Homes Company, begun in 1912. Apartments were provided for about 300 Negro families. Although it began as a risk, it was found that results, both social and financial, exceeded estimates. This venture was inaugurated by Jacob G. Schmidlapp. The cost was \$250 per room. Some of the houses were sold on the rental plan, with \$100 for initial payment and a weekly payment of \$3.10 for ten years. At the end of ten years the purchaser got the deed to the house subject to a mortgage of \$600 at 5 per cent or \$30 a year to be paid off at his convenience. The average earning of the Negroes was \$16 a week; that of the whites from 10 to 20 per cent more. Both paid, on an average, about one-fifth of their weekly earnings in rent. The small group proved a success, and the places were extended for Negroes and whites. After fourteen years the experiment has yielded results which may be profitable to study. In the matter of vacancies and default of payment, between 1924 and 1928, with approximately equal numbers, the losses from default were \$504.62 for Negroes and \$853.01 for whites. In the Washington Terrace group with 600 Negroes, there were 39 arrests over a fourteen-year period, or one arrest for every 215 individuals per year. The rate for the City of Cincinnati in 1923 was one for every fifteen whites and one for every seven and a half Negroes. The mortality was fifteen per thousand as compared with twenty-five per thousand for the entire city. As a corporation, the 5 per cent dividends to stockholders have always been paid, the 2 per cent depreciation (now amounting to \$180,000) laid aside, and \$90,000 accumulated in surplus.

The Michigan Boulevard Garden Apartments sought to test the practicability of investments in Negro housing. Before any step was taken by Mr. Rosenwald, a survey was conducted with a view to determining the actual needs of the Negro population. It appeared that three-, four- and five-room apartments were in greatest demand. Accordingly in 1929 the Michigan Boulevard Garden Apartments were thus built and occupied an entire city

block on the south side of Chicago, with accommodation for 417 families. It is five stories in height and covers less than 40 per cent of the 6 acres of land involved. The apartments are modern in every respect, all apartments being centrally heated from a central oil-burning heating system, furnished with electric refrigerators and combination tub and shower baths. In the center of the block there is a large central garden covering 3 acres of land in which there are planted trees and shrubs. There is a playground for the smaller children in the garden and a sun-room on the roof. The building is fireproof and involves an expenditure of \$2,700,000.

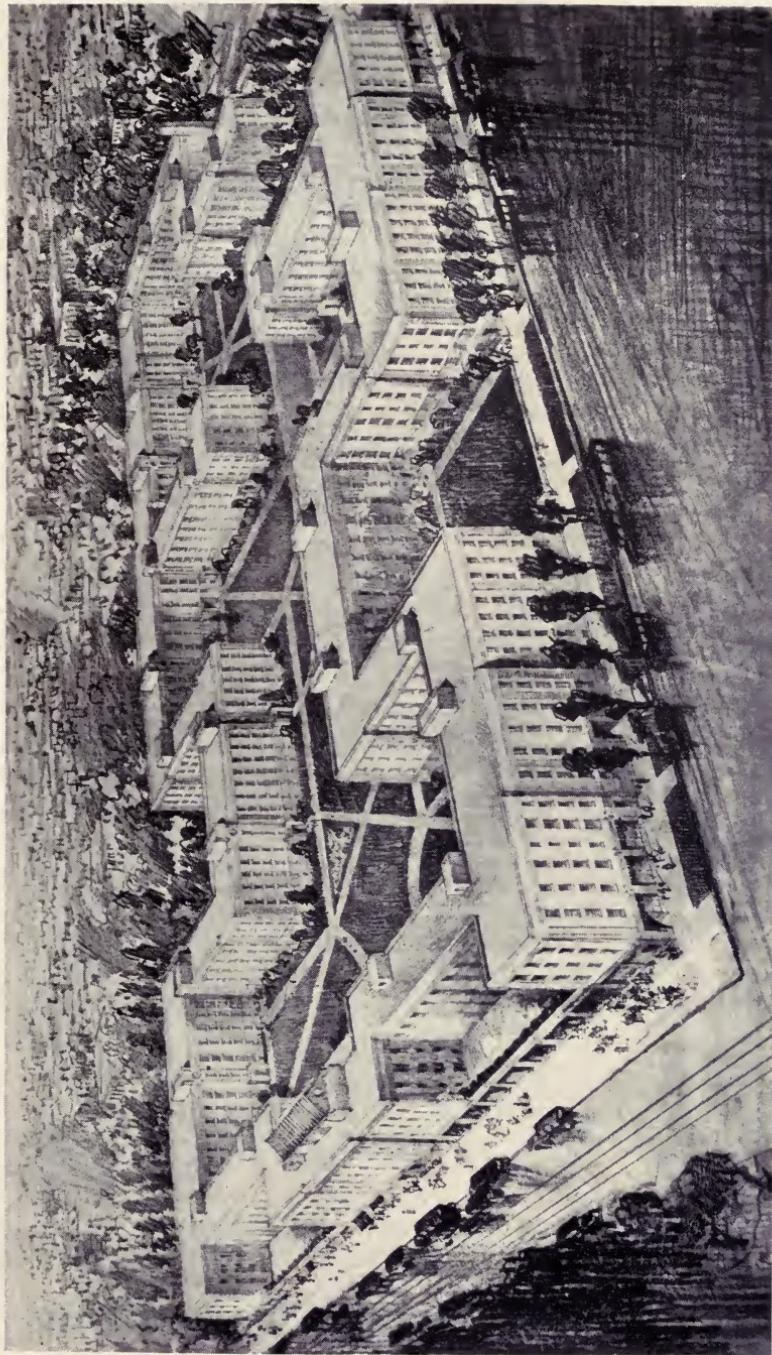
The rents, as might be expected on the basis of the substantial necessities and comforts provided, are somewhat high. The three-room apartments, which consist of living-room, kitchen, bedroom, and bath, average from \$17 to \$18 per room; the four-room apartments, from \$14.50 to \$18 per room; and five-room apartments, from \$13 to \$16 per room. After the first six months of operation, 98 per cent of the apartments had been taken. The building was netting 6 per cent on the capital investment, and there had been loss by default of only about one-eighth of one per cent. After a year of operation, Mr. Rosenwald expressed his satisfaction with the success of the venture.

The Model Homes Company has attempted during the last eighteen months to construct a series of buildings designed to house about three hundred and fifty additional Negro families. Ten acres of ground were purchased for the site of the new buildings. Although the land was adjacent to a Negro community, the white people in that vicinity objected to the extension of the Negro area. Blue prints for this project had been drawn, so the Model Homes Company, for the past year and a half, has been looking, without success, for a new location. It is estimated that this project will cost a million and a half dollars. Four-room apartments were designed to rent for \$30 per month. "Racial attitudes and implications" have prevented the carrying out of this project.<sup>1</sup>

According to the Better Housing League of Cincinnati, the housing agencies are interested in encouraging and controlling the development of carefully selected subdivisions for the Negro.

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<sup>1</sup> Correspondence with Negro Civic Welfare Association, Cincinnati, Ohio.



*Photograph by Henry Fuermann & Sons*

The Michigan Boulevard Garden Apartments of Chicago were built to rent to Negroes. This housing project, financed by Julius Rosenwald, represents an investment of \$2,700,000.



A kitchen in a modern apartment house for Negroes.

"In the past, there have been some subdivisions opened up by unscrupulous real estate men who have taken advantage of Negroes so that many of them have lost their investments. There are, as you know, many different ideas on this subject, and up to this time the people interested in the projects have not entirely agreed upon a way to work it out. However, we hope that in a few years it may be possible to plan such a project."

The two most notable ventures in model housing for Negroes are the Paul Laurence Dunbar Apartments in New York City sponsored by Mr. John D. Rockefeller, designed to be sold, and the Michigan Boulevard Garden Apartments in Chicago sponsored by Mr. Julius Rosenwald, built to be rented. For the Dunbar Apartments, the building and land involved an outlay of \$3,330,000, on which a moderate interest of 5 per cent is expected. Tenants only can be stockholders and stockholders only can be tenants. They subscribe to the amount of stock represented by the cost of the apartment which they select. The down payment called for \$50 per room. A three-year lease is given, with the privilege of renewing each year thereafter. The tenants pay an average of \$14.50 per room per month, of which 54 per cent is principal and interest and 46 per cent upkeep, taxes, insurance and other things. In twenty-two years the tenants will have paid the principal. There are 511 apartments, many social features including nurseries and playgrounds, an employment service, policing and meticulous inspections.<sup>2</sup> More, it is a community.

The type and cost of the venture made it evident that only Negroes of more than average means could take possession. The largest single group of occupants is given as clerks with 100. The median monthly earning was \$148.86.

The incentive supplied by the success of the Paul Laurence Dunbar development in New York and the Julius Rosenwald development in Chicago has led to a movement in Detroit for the establishment of a similar project there. This group, it is said, has the advice and counsel of the Detroit City Planning Commission but the plan is now being held in abeyance because of the present economic situation.

In Newark, New Jersey, the Prudential Life Insurance Company has planned a development of model apartments for Negroes in the Third Ward. The project became involved in litigation as to the right of the city to purchase and maintain as public open

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<sup>2</sup> Data prepared by Roscoe C. Bruce, Resident Manager.

space some of the unbuilt-upon land in connection with the project. Its right to do so has been upheld by the highest court of New Jersey.<sup>3</sup>

In many small cities housing projects have been discussed by interracial committees and other groups of leading citizens, but nothing definite has resulted. In Wilmington, Delaware, where the housing problems of Negroes have been most outstanding since the war, the Citizens Housing Corporation has been trying to secure modern homes for Negroes and do away with many shacks that have been rented to the group. It is said that the group is making rather slow progress.

In Little Rock, Arkansas, a new development called Booker Terrace has been developed since 1925. The changes that have taken place since the migration indicate that, except for a few exclusive white suburban neighborhoods, for the most part all types of real estate are being opened to Negroes. In most neighborhoods both colored and white people reside, sometimes on opposite sides of the streets, sometimes side by side. One real estate operator suggests that "the depression has forced the lowering of real estate and the opening up of desirable property to prospective Negro landowners." Servant quarters are disappearing, though there have been no apartment houses built. There is an increasing tendency toward home ownership among Negroes. In many cases people took on the responsibility of home ownership without adequate incomes, with the result that there have been many losses of homes partially paid for during the past two or three years.

The most outstanding change is recorded in Philadelphia, where the Negro population has gained in increasing numbers in nine additional wards since the time of the Woofter study. There have been a few new homes constructed in some sections. Meanwhile, the old neighborhoods have continued to deteriorate, and families desiring better living conditions have been forced to seek them in new areas slowly coming into the hands of Negro tenants. There have been but few changes in North and South Philadelphia, while West Philadelphia and Germantown have been more progressive in that there have been several apartment houses and rows of homes built recently for colored people. According to

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<sup>3</sup> Simon v. O'Toole, 155 Atl. 449; *N. J. Advance Reports and Weekly Law Review*, Vol. 10, No. 10, March 5, 1932, p. 124.

the Armstrong Association of Philadelphia, the following projects have been developed in Philadelphia since 1928:

"In Germantown, the Montana Gardens Apartments are most comfortable with modern heating and refrigeration systems. There are 43 apartments of the two- and three-room types. They rent for \$8 and \$11 per week.

"The Booker T. Washington Apartments are located in West Philadelphia at 761 N. 47th Street. There are 268 rooms in the three units of the building. The apartments consist of from one to four rooms and their rental varies from \$25 to \$52.

"230 E. Sharpnack Street: 8 modern apartments. Heating, refrigeration systems, Murphy beds. Rentals \$35 to \$40 per month."

Other accommodations built for Negro renters are located as follows:

"A complete modern block formed by 47th, Olive, 48th and Aspen Streets. The homes are of the six-room type, with kitchen and bath; laundry equipment in the basement. Rentals average \$40 per month.

"Eighteen houses on one side of the 4800 block of Brown Street with four more of the same construction extending around the corner on 49th Street. Each with 8 modern rooms and renting for \$45 to \$50 per month.

"Six homes in the 300 block E. Upsal Street, Germantown; 7 modern rooms and garage that rent for \$45 per month."

However, there are a number of problems attending these developments.

The Octavia Hill Association in Philadelphia has been one of the agencies very definitely interested in the problem of Negro housing. One investigator reports:

"It seems, in direct contrast to the high purpose that prompted its origin, the Octavia Hill Association had been forced to subordinate its social betterment motive, more or less, to the necessity of making the venture continue to pay dividends, and thereby subsist during these times when much stronger professional real estate companies were being forced to the wall."

Social workers, health authorities, probation officers and the like all believe that the project has been of aid in improving the lives of the families occupying the dwellings improved by the Association. However, the project has been far from ideal as a housing experiment when it is considered that:

"The ideal would necessitate the destruction of entire blocks in certain sections of old Philadelphia, with sanitary modern dwellings constructed in their place; a wholesale renovating of most of the homes with up-to-date approved conveniences; some method of relieving overcrowding, especially when this is occasioned by families being forced to take lodgers into the home to meet exorbitant rents. The Association had not sufficient resources

for such extensive improvements nor were they able to confine their activities to a single area where intensive planning would affect an entire neighborhood. What they have been able to do is to take over and improve exceptional cases of dilapidated dwellings throughout poor areas of the city and afterwards play the part of a good landlord. Care has been exercised in each case in the selection of tenants so as to offer the homes only to those families which showed most promise of social and economic advancement in a healthy, clean environment—families that without such an opportunity would probably never be able to rise above their old environs. There have been approximately 200 such dwellings owned or managed by the Octavia Hill Association, that are occupied by Negro families in various parts of the city.”<sup>4</sup>

In Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where Negroes because of their low economic status tend to concentrate in the poorest districts even as in other cities, the Pittsburgh Housing Association is attempting to raise the standards of the poorest housing permitted in the city, thereby improving housing conditions for Negroes. Although there is a surplus of dwellings in the lowest rental class, the Association has been emphasizing the desirability of demolishing the worst houses to prevent their being occupied. During the first six months of 1931, more houses were demolished than during any other twelve-month period. Meanwhile, Negroes have been moving into better districts beyond the boundaries of their former areas of occupancy. The result has been a change in the center of Negro population. The Pittsburgh Urban League has been stimulating housing improvement among the Negroes with the cooperation of the Pittsburgh Housing Association. In the past five years there have been only two small housing projects: One, a seven-family apartment house; the other, eleven unattached single-family houses, all modern conveniences, which were first offered for sale at \$7,500 each but later rented at \$65 per month. Our informant adds this interesting comment:

“They have remained occupied and have continued to bring in the amount of rental which they demanded a year or two ago, in spite of the depression, and in spite of the present surplus of houses in the Negro neighborhood.”

There has been some industrial housing for Negroes. Leifur Magnusson's rather comprehensive survey of industrial housing developments, published as a Bulletin of the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1920, found a certain amount of segregation in company towns. The most notable company develop-

<sup>4</sup>Data Supplied to Group on Social and Economic Factors, T. Arnold Hill, Chairman.

ments are at Alcoa, Tennessee; Baden, North Carolina; The Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad Company, and the American Cast Iron Pipe Company on the outskirts of Birmingham; the Reynolds Tobacco Company at Winston-Salem, North Carolina; and the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company in Ohio. The experience of the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company was qualified. The houses were actually built by a subsidiary concern, the Youngstown Land Company. They erected in 1918 and 1919 some 135 concrete, two-, three- and four-room houses to be rented to Negroes. All had baths, electricity and water. Said the company:

"From the beginning our experience with them has not been very satisfactory. While there are always exceptional cases, we have found that good houses, good surroundings and good wages, which they had for some years, have had practically no effect on their living standards. While this company made no effort in social betterment other than the weeding out from the community of gross offenders, there was constant work along this line going on in the City of Campbell, where these houses are located. After about nine years of effort, the lessening desirability of the Negro in industrial works began to cause many vacant houses, and steps were taken to convert the colony, block by block, into quarters for white foreign workers. To the present time, 63 houses have been so taken over, leaving 72 still remaining for Negroes.

"In addition to the above group of 135 houses, this company has had many Negro tenants in other locations about the Youngstown District, but usually they did not have so many conveniences such as bathrooms. It seems to me that they get along as well or better in these older and less convenient houses where rents are lower and social requirements are less."

The American Rolling Mill Company in Middletown, Ohio, built 200 homes of four and five rooms, semi-modern—toilet, city water, sinks, electricity and sewers—and sold them to Negroes at prices ranging from \$1,600 to \$2,250. In addition to this a school and community center were built; playgrounds, swimming pools and ball diamonds provided. "We regard *Bon Veue*" (the settlement), the personnel manager said, "as one of the most attractive subdivisions for colored people, and there are a lot of mighty fine folks living there."

The United States Government built the town of Truxton,<sup>5</sup> in Virginia, near Portsmouth, during the war. It has since been bought by Negroes.

"The town of Truxton, Norfolk County, Virginia, was located originally

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<sup>5</sup> Memorandum prepared by Fred D. McCracken, formerly Operating Manager, Truxton.

just outside the city limits of Portsmouth, Virginia. This town was constructed by the United States Housing Corporation, which was an agency of the United States Department of Labor, and was known as United States Housing Project No. 1,500.

"Truxton, Va., was one of the many housing projects constructed by the Government during the World War to provide suitable housing facilities for war workers in different sections of the country wherever the manufacture of munitions or shipbuilding was in progress. Truxton was the only such project built for colored war workers by the Government and was designed primarily to take care of the employees at the Portsmouth and Norfolk Navy Yards.

"The location of the town was ideal for that part of the country, the town being built on the highest point in Norfolk County.

"Ample transportation facilities into the City of Portsmouth and to the Navy Yards were provided by street car.

"The officials of the United States Housing Corporation had in mind the establishment of a model town. They built two hundred and fifty houses of frame construction, all being of the same material, there being differences, however, in exterior design. Most of the houses contained five rooms, and were designed for single families, though of the total number constructed, twenty-six were designed to accommodate two families. Each house was equipped with bathroom, running water, sewer connections, standard sinks and bowls, and electricity.

"The lots of the single houses measured 28 x 100 feet and of the double houses 40 x 100 feet. Shrubs, plants and flowers were placed about each house. There were no alleys, the houses being separated from each other by neat wire fences.

"There was a store block containing four stores, with eight apartments above. This block housed a drug store, general merchandise store, barber shop and dry goods store.

"The streets were 50 feet wide, were paved, and were amply lighted.

"There was a large public park, which was beautifully landscaped and which contained a wide variety of beautiful vines, shrubs and flowers.

"The town contained one of the most modern school buildings to be found anywhere in the South, with ample grounds and facilities for recreation.

"There was a regular police force comprised of two men, who worked in twelve-hour shifts. There was also a police reserve unit, composed of residents of the community.

"There was a volunteer fire brigade, although the Portsmouth Fire Department responded to any call sent in.

"The very highest standards of sanitation and hygiene were maintained at all times. Garbage was collected daily. The health of the members of the community was excellent, as the system of sanitation that was established was rigidly enforced.

"In addition to other facilities for the residents, there was a well-stocked public library. Community activities were many and varied. There was a Mothers' Club, athletic organization, and three secret fraternal organizations, and one of the barracks formerly used by one of the construction gangs was converted into a church.

"The rental charge for a five-room cottage was \$18 per month.

"From 1919, when the project was completed, until 1920, the operation and government of the town was under an official known as Operating Manager, appointed by the United States Housing Corporation of the Department of Labor. This town was considered by the United States Housing Corporation during the period of its operation as being one of the most successful housing projects operated by the Government, and was so located that it was a community by itself, situated on the road from Portsmouth to points south.

"There was practically no disorder during the entire period of operation. In fact, not a single arrest was made. This was really remarkable, considering the fact that some fifteen hundred persons resided in the town. The Operating Manager heard and settled minor disputes among neighbors or members of family groups.

"We were able to instil a spirit of race and civic pride among the residents, who thoroughly comprehended the original aim and desire to make it a model town from every point of view. To the residents belongs the credit of making the experiment an unqualified success."

"In 1920, the Government ordered the sale of the property. It was sold on a basis of 60 per cent of its original value, 5 per cent in cash, and the balance in deferred payments at the rate of 1 per cent per month. In other words, a single house sold on an average of \$1,800: \$90 down and \$18 per month, including interest.

"All the property was bought by colored people. . . . All public utilities, including the school, were turned over to the city of Portsmouth. Portsmouth extended its corporate limits so as to include the town of Truxton, the latter becoming a part of the city of Portsmouth.

"The Truxton experiment was considered a success from every angle by housing experts and government officials, and it is thought that it could be easily duplicated in practically any state of the Union, especially in the South, where the housing problem is especially acute among Negroes. . . ."

Some interest in Negro housing has been stimulated by *Better Homes in America*. Their purposes, as stated, are to make information available about high standards in house building, home furnishing and home life, encourage the building of sound, beautiful, simple family houses, and encourage the reconditioning and remodeling of old houses, and kindred matters. In June of 1931, Mrs. Helen Storror reported that 674 committees were organized in all parts of the United States during 1930 to arrange for the participation of Negro citizens in a nation-wide better homes campaign.

The will of Negroes, is, to a most pronounced degree, for homes and better homes. But, on the basis of the data herein set forth, they have been, perhaps, more seriously handicapped than any other group in America in getting them.

## CHAPTER VII

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. In view of the desperate conditions brought out in this study of Negro and other minority groups, we recommend that a National Housing Commission be appointed by the President whose function shall be to serve as a research commission, to encourage states to pass adequate housing laws, and to suggest administrative measures for enforcement of state and municipal laws.

2. In those states in which there are not adequate housing laws, we recommend that a state commission be appointed to secure adequate legislation and to investigate conditions with a view to correction through various state and municipal channels. We further recommend that this commission be interracial, nonpolitical, and nonpartisan.

3. We recommend that each municipality maintain a permanent commission whose function it shall be to investigate housing conditions and to present for adoption specific ordinances suited to the community housing needs, and to provide controls for the enforcement of these ordinances. In this connection we recommend that interracial groups seek the cooperation of city officials and civic organizations to secure necessary improvements in Negro sections.

4. We recommend that Negroes follow the trend in urban communities and move out into subdivisions in which modern homes can be built.

5. In the blighted areas we recommend that the houses which are legally condemned shall be razed or so closed that habitation cannot continue. We recommend the abolition of alley dwellings. The building space can be used profitably for garages and warehouses.

6. For the interstitial areas the recommendations would range all the way from razing to rehabilitation, razing the deteriorated and condemned buildings near the business section and rehabilitation for the better houses farther removed from the business area. It is further recommended that in this area new housing projects should be undertaken.

7. In the area of substantial construction we recommend that the following resources be used to create public opinion in order to establish controls among the Negroes themselves when municipal or state regulations fall down with reference to housing: Urban Leagues and other civic agencies, newspapers, neighborhood associations, business organizations, especially colored insurance companies, women's clubs, churches, Y. M. C. A.'s, and parent-teacher organizations.

8. Because of the prevalence of influences in Negro neighborhoods which tend to destroy, we recommend that responsible, established welfare agencies include in their general program the formation of neighborhood clubs, ward organizations, and other devices to create public opinion for: Better appearances of the individual home; better aesthetic taste within the home; organization of clean-up and paint-up campaigns; beautification of lawns, the planting of trees and shrubbery; cleaner backyards and alleys.

9. We believe that the rapid development of the converted kitchenette apartment constitutes a moral and physical hazard of first importance, and we recommend that an exhaustive study be made to determine its effects with reference to deterioration of property, congestion, sanitary conditions, health, and morals.<sup>5</sup>

10. It is recommended that special consideration be given housing for urban people with incomes of \$1,000 a year and rural dwellers with incomes as low as \$750 a year, and that civic-minded people be induced to establish adequate financing agencies at reasonable interest for people of low incomes. None of the large housing investments in America has helped the family with a total income of \$25 a week. Safe and profitable investments can be made in this field and it will be a boon to rural home ownership. In general, housing ventures have looked to people with incomes of \$2,000 a year or more. If it is not feasible to build low-priced apartments as business investments, we recommend that consideration be given to the intervention by public funds either through tax relief or through direct subsidy as has been done by Vienna and other European cities.

11. Further recommendations include the encouragement of building and loan associations under responsible auspices and the participation of Negroes in programs for home betterment sponsored by national organizations.

12. We recommend the removal of legislation restrictive of Negro residence in desirable residence sections of the city where they are able to rent or purchase.

13. We recommend the development of rural social work projects designed to encourage the improvement of sanitation, home life, and physical surroundings of rural Negro families.

14. We recommend the establishment of minimum standards of housing for tenants on plantations.

15. Rural housing projects among Negroes are retarded for the reason that prospective purchasers are charged higher rates of interest, offered unfair instalment terms, and have difficulty securing insurance protection. Information relative to purchasing, improving and modernizing their homes is seldom available to them. We therefore recommend the organization of local cooperative associations of Negro home owners and prospective home owners for the purpose of enabling community groups to bargain collectively for financing facilities. The group acting and working cooperatively would be able to secure all information relative to such undertakings, could take advantage of bargains offered and the inspiration and strength acquired by working together would stimulate activity and progress in rural home ownership.

16. We recommend that there be sought the cooperation of all educational and welfare agencies, interested in rural Negroes, for the purpose of stimulating practical interest by education and demonstration in housing.

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<sup>5</sup> See Appendix VII, "The Kitchenette Apartment," p. 258.

### Further Projects for Study on Housing<sup>6</sup>

**"1. A Comparative Study of the Movement of Negro Population in Northern and Southern Cities.** The material and findings presented in this paper have been drawn from northern cities where in recent years the Negroes, rapidly increasing in number, have taken the rôle of an immigrant group. Obviously, the factors determining the location and shifting of population groups are quite different in the South. For example, Jesse F. Steiner in an unpublished study of the distribution of Negroes in New Orleans finds significant correlations of Negro population movement with the varying number of feet of depression of various areas below the level of the Mississippi River.

**"2. A Comparative Study of Different Types of Negro Communities Within a City.** In a term paper on the distribution of Negro communities in St. Louis, Berenice O'Fallon makes an interesting comparison of different rôles taken by the various neighborhoods in the larger Negro community corresponding with their position in the five urban zones. Extending from the central business district (I) into the zone of transition (II) are (a) the Negro slums along the river frontage frequented by hoboes, dope fiends, drunkards; (b) a low grade rooming house district with certain streets given over to prostitution, inhabited by low-paid workers in nearby railroad yards and factories; and (c) better furnished rooms where dwell men employed as porters, waiters, policy vendors, professional card sharks and women working out in service as cooks, maids, chambermaids in hotels and laundresses, and where are located such institutions of night life as the dance hall, the cabaret and the club house. In the workingmen's zone (III) is located (d) a workingmen's district with low rents and little repair on dwellings where the men do various kinds of laborious work for a weekly pay check of twenty to twenty-five dollars, and the women work in laundries and factories, scrub office buildings and do housework by the day. In the residential zone (IV) are found (e) a good residential section of fine, large homes lately acquired by the Negroes from wealthy owners who have moved into palatial apartment buildings or into exclusive suburban sections, and (f) a bungalow district in which reside men who are postal clerks, mail carriers, small business men and highly paid skilled working-men with weekly incomes of forty-five to fifty-five dollars, and women who are housewives, stenographers, and elevator and stock girls in department stores. In the suburban zone (V) there are located (g) near the wealthy suburban districts several small Negro settlements whose inhabitants are mainly mulattoes.

"The statement has been made by Robert E. Park that Negro society is not at all homogeneous as erroneously thought by most outsiders, but has actually as many, if not more, economic and social gradations as white society. In his study of the Negro family in Chicago, E. Franklin Frazier

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<sup>6</sup> Items 1 to 6 suggested by Dr. Ernest W. Burgess, "Residential Segregation in American Cities," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, November, 1928, Vol. 140.

is engaged in developing a technique to measure with some degree of precision these differences in economic and social status implied in this impressionistic analysis, from the standpoint of location, of the social structure of Negro society in St. Louis.

**"3. A Study of Changes in Land Values Incident to Negro Invasion of an Area.** The entrance of the Negro into a white community results in an immediate apparent depreciation in land values. This also results, but not always so rapidly, from any other racial or immigrant intrusion or from commercial and industrial encroachment. No study has, however, been made of the long time effect upon land values of Negro settlement. A cursory examination of the trend in land values from 1912 to 1928 as entered in Olcott's *Land Values Blue Book* of Chicago seems to indicate that in time residential values tend slowly to recover from their losses, but that commercial values, with little or no check, forge rapidly ahead.

"The fact is that Negroes frequently acquire sites in the direction of business and industrial growth. A Negro once owned property on Wall Street in New York. Two Negro churches with locations in and near the Loop in Chicago were able to realize on the sale of their property enough to clear their mortgages and to purchase suitable sites further south in districts to which their parishioners had migrated. In the case of the Bethel American Methodist Episcopal Church this was possible only through the generous assistance of a wealthy white friend who advanced the sums necessary to prevent foreclosure of the mortgage.

"More frequently, however, Negro property owners are not in a position to take advantage of the future rise in land value. They have not been able in New York, for example, to profit as have certain institutions which have moved several times because they were able to hold the property until they could capitalize on each occasion upon the increase in land values.

"In certain cases where clashes have occurred upon the invasion by the Negro of a white residential area, a period of quiet follows in which it would seem that the Negroes have been kept out. But actual study shows that in many cases the reverse is true. The Negro really had acquired property, and his progress of penetration continued peacefully until he had obtained possession of the neighborhood. These situations merit further investigation.

**"4. Density of Population in Negro Settlements—Density—Height of Buildings.** Woofter in his volume *Negro Problems in Cities*, shows that the density per acre is much greater for Negroes than for whites in the same city. He also indicates that the density in Negro settlements varies widely. An examination of the census tracts for Chicago showed, however, that the density of population in certain immigrant settlements, particularly the Polish, was much higher than in any Negro neighborhood. In general, the density of population in Negro neighborhoods was practically the same as that of other neighborhoods in the same urban zone. Further study should be made in order to determine whether or not in other cities the density of population is greater or less in Negro than in white neighborhoods in the same urban zone. In any study of rates of density of population, it is always desirable to distinguish between neighborhoods by prevailing type of dwellings and height of buildings as between single homes, two-flat and

tenement or apartment houses, and one-story, two-story, or many-story structures.

**"5. A Study of Rents in Negro Neighborhoods.** All investigations of rents in Negro areas show that on the average rents are higher for Negroes than for whites. These studies, however, are generally made in times of a housing crisis for the Negroes and in periods of Negro migration into the city. It would be desirable to study rents for the different types of Negro neighborhoods in the city to determine more accurately the factors making for higher rent, and, if possible, the conditions under which rents are stabilized at the level prevailing in white neighborhoods.

**"6. A Study of the Proximity of Vice Resorts and Negro Districts.** In many cities, as Chicago, Kansas City, Buffalo, Springfield, Illinois, Fort Wayne, Indiana, Topeka, Kansas, vice has been located in openly recognized segregated districts or in concealed resorts within or adjacent to Negro districts. Presumably the Negro has been forced to seek these areas for residence because of his difficulty in gaining entrance to better residential districts. With the abolition of segregated districts, new institutions have made their appearance in the city like the cabaret and the closed dance hall. So-called 'black and tan' cabarets and night clubs run openly in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles. No adequate study of the rôle and function of these institutions has as yet been made. They demand further study as one phase of the interesting drama of race relations in our largest American cities."

**7. Negro Rural Housing.** A study of physical and social problems of housing in selected rural communities together with inquiries into the standard of living and earning capacity of Negro families engaged in agricultural work.

**8. Standards of Living of the Various Economic Classes of the Negro Population.**

**9. Standards of Living of Negro Families in the North and South.**

**10. The operation of housing projects for Negroes,** with comparison of such social factors as morbidity, mortality, delinquency, illegitimacy, etc., with groups of families in unsupervised housing areas.

**11. A study of Negro home ownership,** including methods by which ownership of property is commonly acquired; the effects of credit; relation of income and regularity of employment to risk value and to acquirement of ownership; value of property owned in relation to occupation, education and income.

**12. Study of the social and financial effects of Negro residence upon property value according to location with respect to elements of the white population in selected communities in the North and South.**

**13. Further study of Negro residence in areas of transition** in relation to the social factors of delinquency, illegitimacy and social standards.

## APPENDIX I

### EXTRACTS FROM STUDIES OF NEGRO HOUSING—ITS PHYSICAL ASPECTS

#### I. Urban Surveys

##### General

“. . . It is essential that . . . environmental influences be emphasized, (in Negro housing) since they prove to be important factors in disease, crime and morality. Many people attribute excessive Negro death-rates from tuberculosis, pneumonia and the diseases of infants to inborn racial traits, others attribute crimes of violence and irregularities in family life to peculiar emotional equipment of people of African descent. Regardless of whether these traits are influenced to some extent by heredity or not, this analysis of the city environment indicates that they are also profoundly influenced by the conditions of life in cities . . . p. 18.

“. . . Urbanization of Negro population signifies far more than the mere transference of two million people. It involves a profound cultural change and demands multiple readjustments. . .

“The problems of the new environment have proved grave for the Negroes and for the cities into which they have moved. In a number of cities they represent a very vexing series of social mal-adjustments. The difficulties of adapting these country people to city houses, city schools and city neighborhood organizations are real. The exploitation of their ignorance of city conditions and of their position when segregation restricts their choice of residence or activity is discouraging, even though this exploitation is often similar to that of white groups of similar economic status. . . pp. 20-21.

“Another great difficulty in the way of Negroes in their struggle for better homes has been a persistence of the attitudes of slavery. The Emancipation Proclamation did not, with a stroke of a pen, strike off the fetters of thought which had been worn for two centuries. During slavery, Negroes lived in cabins in the back yard. It was but a step from these to cabins in some back alley or backwash of the city—down in the hollow, or between the railroad tracks, where land was almost valueless. At first, white people with the slave-holding attitude felt that such places were the

natural habitat of the Negro; and colored people with slave attitudes were not accustomed to anything better. In the early days of freedom no one dreamed of putting municipal improvements into these neighborhoods . . ." pp. 21-22<sup>1</sup>

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"Most American whites refuse to live in the same neighborhood with Negroes. Many whites, when Negroes attempt to enter a new neighborhood, either start legal action, resort to mob violence, or move away . . . p. 107.

"In the first place, the housing accommodations which the Negro roomer or renter is compelled to accept are, of necessity, poor. The buildings which he occupies are in the oldest part of town; therefore, they are usually unprovided with modern sanitary and other conveniences. Then the extreme overcrowding of Negro neighborhoods renders the housing situation doubly difficult. . .

"All Negroes do not live in such squalor. The housing standard of the well-to-do Negro is equal to that of the well-to-do white man. But the masses of Negro workers take the broken victuals of American housing facilities." p. 122.<sup>2</sup>

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". . . Throughout the industrial centers of the North the majority of Negro homes are located in sections where transportation facilities are inadequate, or in areas where the expansion of business houses, railroads and factories has rendered the district undesirable for residential purposes, or else in old sections where the paving, lighting, street cleaning and sanitary regulations are neglected . . ." p. 157.<sup>3</sup>

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"There are few cities without Negro sections, and few of these sections that are not located within a stone's throw of the city's business district. It is one of the most curious phenomena of city growth. In Chicago it is the second ward, beginning where the 'Loop' ends; in Philadelphia it skirts along two blocks from Broad Street; in Atlanta, Auburn Avenue of business breaks suddenly into Auburn Avenue of the Negroes and gradually fades into

<sup>1</sup> Woofter, T. J. Jr. and Associates, *Negro Problems in Cities*, Garden City, N. Y., Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1928.

<sup>2</sup> Nearing, Scott, *Black America*, New York, Vanguard Press, 1929.

<sup>3</sup> Kennedy, Louise Venable, *The Negro Peasant Turns Cityward*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1930.

whiteness again; Beale Street of Memphis, famed for its 'Blues' of 'low' Negro origin, traces a similar course. In Richmond, Virginia, the Negroes' Leigh and Clay Streets are just two blocks from Broad Street, the center of business; in Savannah, the Negro district begins across the street from the new Union Station, so placed to indicate the center of transportation activities. Even in New York City, which has taken a somewhat untypical city growth, there is Columbus Hill around 58th Street within sight of Fifth Avenue and Broadway; and the remnants of the migration to Harlem may still be seen moving in and out of the archaic dwellings not yet destroyed, and not three blocks from the heart of the theatre district.

"The course of a consistent tendency is marked in these. For it develops that in each case the Negro residence area is located on approximately the first residence sites of the city. As the city grows and the encroachments of business render the original areas less desirable for residence, the first owners move farther out, to newer developments. They are followed in turn, in the old dwellings, by successively lower income classes, as owners or renters. The buildings become older and more difficult to keep in repair; boarding houses and lodging places appear. Exclusiveness is gone. Low-income foreign groups may move in. If their economic level is not improved sufficiently to allow individuals to move out, it becomes 'Little Italy,' or 'Little Ireland.' Not infrequently the indiscriminateness of these transitional areas permits the entrance of houses of prostitution, or the milder iniquity of 'buffet flats,' and, in the more modern parlance 'bootleg joints.' These are the areas, generally, that become the Negro centers. For a greater income in rent may be secured from this social group than from the economic class of whites next in order of succession. Unlike the native or immigrant white, the elevation of economic status alone does not make possible movement to a different or newer area. The property is potentially valuable for business, depending, of course, upon the capricious direction of the city's growth. Carter Woodson's compilation of free Negro heads of Negro families in 1830 shows New York City Negroes living on Wall, Nassau, Sullivan, Canal and Rector Streets, holdings now of prohibitively high value. Abyssinia Baptist Church remained in the old Negro center on 50th Street until a few years ago before it moved to Harlem.

Of the homes now occupied in Harlem only a very few have been built by Negroes. They have been inherited and among these are rare examples of the architectural stamp of Stanford White. The Harlem dwellings are more habitable because they are relatively newer. The measure of general Negro housing in enough cities to make it a rule, becomes the quality of the property inheritance. . . pp. 199-200.

"Among the first and most dismal of the social problems encountered by migrants from the South was that of housing congestion. Negro residence areas expand very slowly, and when these are hemmed in, as frequently happens, by other social or natural barriers the result immediately registers in overcrowding. . ." p. 207.<sup>4</sup>

#### Albany, New York

"With the exception of a relatively small number of homes built by Negro owners for their own use, not one new structure has been made available for the Negro tenant since 1900. A large portion of the houses occupied by Negroes are very old brick buildings and their death, barring accidental destruction, is so lingering and drawn out over so many years of decline and decay that they are undesirable from external appearances alone. In some cases essential repairs were made and the life of the building prolonged, while in other cases no repairs have been made and the buildings remain occupied. The houses do not represent what the city approves according to its Building Ordinance, but it does represent what Albany tolerates and offers to the increasing Negro population group. The Negro population is widely scattered in Albany, being distributed throughout 17 of the 19 wards of the city.

"In general there is a low standard of housing for the Negro population in Albany. The scanty equipment and poor repair of the average Negro dwelling make the rent paid comparatively high."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Johnson, Charles S., *The Negro in American Civilization*, New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1930.

<sup>5</sup> Reid, Ira DeA., *The Negro Population of Albany, N. Y.*, New York, National Urban League, 1928.

### Charleston, West Virginia

"The investigators went into 681 homes, or 85 per cent of all the homes occupied by Negroes in the city. Two thousand nine hundred persons reside in these homes of which 2,148 are adults and 752 are children. Practically all of the houses are of lumber construction, detached and with ample light and ventilation. The general sanitary condition is remarkably good when it is remembered that more than 75 per cent of these houses are more than ten years old. The yards and walls are generally clean and the plumbing is in good condition. About 75 per cent of the houses investigated have bathtubs, hot and cold water. There are several alleys in which many Negroes live; but many of them are paved and they are kept in good condition by the city government. The alleys and back streets of Charleston are almost entirely free from trash and rubbish heaps and garbage is not permitted to accumulate and putrefy in the rear of houses. There are only a few stables in the sections in which many Negroes live and those that are there are kept in a clean condition. . ." p. 45.<sup>6</sup>

### Chicago, Illinois

"A selection was made of 274 Negro families living in all sections of Chicago. . . p. 152.

"For the most part the physical surroundings of the Negro family, as indicated by these family histories, are poor. . . p. 152.

"On the South Side, where most of the Negro population lives, the low quality of housing is widespread, although there are some houses of a better grade which are greatly in demand.

"The ordinary conveniences, considered necessities by the average white citizen, are often lacking. Bathrooms are often missing. Gas lighting is common, and electric lighting is a rarity. Heating is commonly done by wood or coal stoves, and furnaces are rather exceptional; when furnaces are present, they are sometimes out of commission. . . p. 152.

"Except where the property is owned by Negroes there is frequent moving. The records obtained of these movements give a great variety of reasons. A strong desire to improve living con-

<sup>6</sup> *The Negro in West Virginia*, "Housing Conditions"—A Survey of the Negro Population of Charleston, West Virginia, Report of the Bureau of Negro Welfare and Statistics, Charleston, West Virginia, 1921-1922. (T. Edward Hill, Director.)

ditions appears with sufficient frequency to indicate that it is the leading motive. Buying a home is one of the ways of escape from intolerable living conditions, but removal to other houses or flats is more often tried. . ." p. 154.<sup>7</sup>

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"An almost complete cessation in the building of dwellings in Chicago extended over the greater part of the period when Negro migration was heaviest. As the most recent comers into the tenement districts of the city, Negroes and Mexicans have found shelter in the most used, most outworn and derelict housing which the city keeps. The old tenement districts have long been experiencing a steady encroachment by industry and commerce. In whole or in part as residence sections they are destined for extinction. Already deterioration is general in them, both in their houses and in their neighborhood conditions. It is unlikely that anything will be done to make these districts more fit for dwelling places. Although in many cases it seems hardly conceivable, it nevertheless is probable that further decline and deterioration are all that can be predicted with certainty for much of the renting property in them. . . pp. 7, 9.

"About 8 per cent of the 770 buildings in which the families included in this study dwelt occupied the rear of the lots and had another building in front of them. Almost six out of every ten buildings (59 per cent) had not more than two floors. Fifty-six per cent had only one or two dwellings in them. Fully half were of frame construction though within the fire limits. These are characteristics of older buildings rather than of recent construction in the thickly populated sections of a large city. As a city grows, the one-family frame houses give way to larger multi-family buildings of brick. Land values increase and the ideal of having a city of one-family homes fades into impracticability. . ." p. 15.<sup>8</sup>

### Columbus, Ohio

"Households living in rented dwellings constitute about three-quarters of the total number studied. In actual numbers, there

<sup>7</sup> The Chicago Commission on Race Relations, *The Negro in Chicago*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1922.

<sup>8</sup> Hughes, Elizabeth A., *Living Conditions for Small-Wage Earners in Chicago*, Bureau of Social Surveys, Chicago Department of Public Welfare, 1925.

were 139 renters' households among the 188 homes visited. Forty-one families lived in their own homes and the remaining eight gave no report as to tenure.

"It is well known that unsatisfactory housing conditions are associated with poverty, both as a cause and as an effect. The very poor man, especially if he has lived only under rural conditions, does not know how to care for modern equipment when he secures a good house. He justifies the landlord's claim that poor people have poor ways. On the other hand, the lack of sanitary facilities is a real reason for dirt and disorder. The housewife who must carry all water from a distant well or hydrant cannot be held entirely to blame if the house is not immaculate. Under such conditions good habits of housekeeping are likely to suffer degeneration.

"Negro migrants are poor. Their poverty and the barriers of race restrict them severely in their selection of a home. To this home they bring their country habits, thus helping to keep housing standards low; especially is this true in a district like Champion Avenue, where many of the lots are almost entirely taken up with cheap structures built primarily to produce income from rentals . . . pp. 146-147.

"Two types of dwellings prevail in this district. There is the old, solidly built house which was originally built for the use of its owner. Some of these houses have been remodeled and modernized by their present owners; others have been divided into tenements; still others remain unchanged—substantial, but not modern. There is also the type of dwelling which had been built more recently and less substantially, not to house its owner, but rather to supply him with an income from rents. Dwellings of this type are usually built at the least possible cost and with the fewest possible conveniences. Costs of repair on such houses would be heavy if repairs were made, but it is seldom found necessary to keep such houses in repair in order to rent them. Several cases can be pointed out in which the landlord has built two four-family flats on one lot with a sixty-foot frontage on the street. One flat is built close to the sidewalk and facing the street, and the other is built on the rear of the lot, facing the alley. The prevailing size of these flats is four rooms. Practically all of them are rental properties, as is shown by the fact

that of the 84 households living in four-room apartments, only three were reported as living in their own homes.

"These built-up alleys are often dignified by the term 'court.' A row of sheds built between the two flats, over the sewer-main, contains the fuel supply and the toilets. The latter are generally of the long-hopper type, with a funnel tile connected directly with the sewer-main, but with no flush arrangement to clear the funnel, which in many cases becomes clogged, especially in freezing weather or when used as a garbage receiver. When this happens, such a 'toilet' becomes in fact a poor kind of vault privy, in violation of the real intent of the public health laws." pp. 48-49.<sup>9</sup>

### Dallas, Texas

"The analysis of some 1,245 survey reports on as many houses has been done with care and illustrates both the physical and environmental conditions of Negro housing.

A—Desirable .....	199	15%
B—Good but lacking in some particulars .....	421	33.8
C—Barely habitable .....	385	31
D—Unfit for habitation .....	240	19.2
<hr/>		1,245

"It is hence apparent that a little less than 50 per cent of the houses presently occupied by Negroes are reasonably fit for good family life, while nearly 20 per cent of the houses ought actually to be destroyed . . .

"(a) There are two economic groups among the Negroes, the thrifty and home-loving and the shiftless and disorderly. The whites are afflicted the same way.

"(b) The judgment of fair-minded people that there is a large and growing percentage of thrifty and home-caring Negroes is amply borne out by the survey. In the face of appalling obstacles, home ownership and respectable home and household conditions are fully evidenced by the facts set out in the preceding pages.

"(c) There is no evidence that the Negroes of Dallas seek residential quarters among the whites in order to be among the whites. The thrifty and self-respecting Negroes' only endeavor in this respect is to find a place where in peace and security, with and for their own people, they may have opportunity for a respectable home life with the common environmental privileges and conveniences which belong to decent living.

"(d) Evidence has been presented that the frequent cause for invitations

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<sup>9</sup> Mark, Mary Louise, *Negroes in Columbus (Ohio)*, (Section on Housing Conditions), Columbus, Department of Sociology, Ohio State University, Ohio State University Press, 1928.

on the part of the whites through so-called encroachments on assumed white territory, lies at the door of unscrupulous traders—and white traders at that.

"(e) There is ample evidence of exploitation of Negroes, both as to rentals and outright sales of property. This exploitation has many phases:

Sections wholly undesirable for human habitation.

Shacks unfit for habitation produce shocking revenues.

Houses without any common conveniences and with bad environment produce exorbitant rentals.

Houses are left in bad repair the tenant fearing to urge repair lest his rental be raised beyond reason.

Ground most unfitted for residences and without any convenience whatever is sold to purchasers at amazing prices.

In purchases, the Negro is frequently mulcted in his purchase to the extent of 25 per cent or more beyond what a white purchaser would pay.

"(f) The promotion of good housing and home owning is always in contemplation of the thrifty and industrious.

"Having then in mind that, to their own lasting credit Negroes are seeking to promote a clean, respectable home life, the following must not be forgotten. The shiftless white family may be willing to live anywhere under most any evil condition. But when the white wishes to better his housing conditions, he can go anywhere he chooses and is only limited by his financial condition.

"The respectable Negro, on the other hand is not only limited as to exact territory, but that limitation is usually set where decent home conditions are most difficult or perhaps impossible to provide."<sup>10</sup>

#### Detroit, Michigan

"Housing is one of the most serious problems of the Negro in Detroit. For some years the fluctuating shortage in the number of houses for the population in general has had its greatest effect upon the Negro group . . .

"This St. Antoine district, (which holds the largest Negro population) may be termed a deteriorating area from the standpoint of family housing. Bordering on the main commercial center of the city, it is no longer a favorable location for residential purposes, as factories, garages and other commercial establishments have been built. The paving is not generally of the best and traffic is heavy. Land values are high since the area is chiefly used for

<sup>10</sup> *A Survey of Negro Housing in Dallas, Texas*, The Dallas Committee on Interracial Cooperation, Civic Federation of Dallas, 1924-1925. (Manuscript.)

manufacturing or commercial purposes. A preponderance of the houses are old frame dwellings, and as the landlords are interested in them only as a temporary source of income until the property can be sold for other than residential purposes, sanitary conditions are often far from the best. In some blocks the houses are so dilapidated that expenditure on the part of the owner to make them suitable for living purposes would be useless. However, since houses still remain and Negro tenants can be obtained for them at any reasonable rent, most of them are still occupied.

"The fact that the whites in Detroit feel that the presence of a Negro in a neighborhood depreciates property values is one of the most important factors in 'the race problem'."<sup>11</sup>

#### Elizabeth, New Jersey

"In Elizabeth, as in many other northern cities, there are no new houses built for occupancy by Negro tenants. Today, a number of the houses occupied by Negroes, particularly in Elizabethport, are unfit for human habitation. The life of such houses is so long and their death, barring accidental destruction, is so lingering and drawn out over so many years of decline and decay that they are undesirable on external appearances alone. In some cases essential repairs have been made, and the buildings have remained occupied. Such conditions do not represent what the City of Elizabeth approves as satisfactory according to its ordinances, but they do represent what Elizabeth tolerates and offers to the ever-increasing Negro population."<sup>12</sup>

#### Evanston, Illinois

"Information on nationality and racial characteristics was secured from a somewhat larger sample. Of the heads of 10,589 families, 80 per cent were native born white, 9 per cent colored, and 11 per cent foreign born. The tendency of the Negro and so-called foreign born families to concentrate in certain sections of the city was noticeable, 78 per cent of the colored families living in one small section about eight blocks in diameter on the western edge of the city, and 40 per cent of the foreign born liv-

<sup>11</sup> *The Negro in Detroit* (Section V, "Housing"), Prepared for the Mayor's Interracial Committee, Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research, Inc., 1926. (Mimeographed.)

<sup>12</sup> Reid, Ira DeA., *A Survey of the Negro Population of Elizabeth, N. J.*, New York, National Urban League, 1930.

ing immediately adjacent to the Negroes in an equally small section. The Polish families reveal the greatest tendency to concentrate, as nine-tenths of them live in this one 'foreign' section." p. 171.<sup>13</sup>

### Kansas City, Missouri

"... Few cities in the United States have better housing for the middle classes and for a large part of the working class; yet, in spite of these hopeful conditions, Kansas City has a housing problem of sufficient gravity to call for a vigorous movement to eradicate the evils which now exist. The housing problem as related to the Negro is an especially serious one, since only limited districts are available to him for residence purposes; and, as the population increases, these districts must either be enlarged or become overcrowded. The latter course has usually prevailed, and as a result the conditions have been gradually growing worse . . . p. 86.

"These figures <sup>14</sup> show that the 1,009 persons represented occupy 1,069 rooms, which gives an average of 1.06 rooms for each individual. These figures <sup>14</sup> do not indicate overcrowding to any great extent, since the estimate for overcrowding is usually placed at 1.5 persons per room. We note also that 181, or 52 per cent of the families, occupy three rooms . . . p. 90.

"Toilet accommodations are also totally inadequate. The present requirements of the sanitary ordinances of the city provide that not less than one water-closet or privy shall be furnished for every twenty persons, while the new building code provides that there must be one of these for every fifteen persons. Little effort has been made to enforce these provisions, especially in the old buildings where the mass of the Negroes are living . . . p. 94.

"Only a small percentage of the houses in the congested Negro districts are provided with baths, either tub or shower, though the nature of the daily work done by both the Negro men and the Negro women makes it absolutely necessary for them to keep clean, if they are to retain their health and self-respect; yet the houses in which they are forced to live are not provided with the

<sup>13</sup> Hinman, Albert G., "An Inventory of Housing in a Suburban City," *Journal of Land and Public Utility Economics*, Chicago, May, 1931, Vol. 7, pp. 169-180.

<sup>14</sup> See Table, page 89, *op. cit.*

means. In an investigation made by the Board of Public Welfare near Garrison Square only two bathtubs were found in 827 Negro houses. However, the conditions are not so bad in the other sections of the city. Since baths are not provided by the Negro in his house, there remains no place in the entire city, save the free baths in the Allen Chapel African Methodist Church and a few Negro barber shops, where the Negro can secure a bath.

"Again, most of the Negro residences are provided neither with gas nor with furnaces and since the basements are rented for living purposes, no place is provided for storing fuel, and as a result it must be purchased in small quantities.

"The question naturally arises, 'Why do these Negroes live in such houses and in such environment, or why do they not move into more desirable sections of the city?' As stated before, the habitation of the Negro is restricted to certain districts, where he must live under the conditions existing there. Hundreds of Negroes, however, seem perfectly satisfied, not only with their accommodations, but also with their station in life . . . pp. 96-97.

"For several years there has been a great demand for Negro apartments; they have become quite fashionable among the Negroes, as well as among the whites, and as a result a great many have been erected to supply this demand. They offer some conveniences, such as brick buildings, paved streets, light and water, which the old dilapidated buildings on the North Side do not offer . . . p. 92.

"In the congested districts described above, where more than 15,000 Negroes live, the accommodations offered—whether the old dilapidated buildings in 'Belvidere' or the cheap tenements on 'The Bowery'—are very limited. Nearly half of the houses are without water, while less than one-fourth of them possess either baths or toilets. In many cases the water must be secured from a hydrant back of the houses; these hydrants are, of course, frozen up during a good portion of the winter—a condition which makes it necessary for the families to carry water from neighbors who chance to be fortunate enough to have water in the house, or to secure it from a near-by saloon. I was told by a number of white landlords that they could not afford to put water in the houses, since the Negro could not be depended upon to keep the house warm, which resulted in the freezing of the pipes and a large plumbing bill. Several instances were cited where such bills ex-

ceed the rent during the winter months. In many of the tenement houses a single hydrant in the hall supplied water for all the families in the building." pp. 93-94.<sup>15</sup>

### Knoxville, Tennessee

"The physical surroundings of the Negro family, for the most part are poor; the ordinary conveniences, considered necessities by the average white citizen, often are lacking. Often there is no bathroom. Kerosene-lamp lighting is common, and in numerous cases there is no electricity. Heating usually is done by wood or coal stoves and furnaces are rather exceptional.

"Under 'Sanitary conditions in and around home' such notations as these are found:

Poorly constructed house; two and more families in three-room house; home in filthy condition; house and yard very unsanitary; roof leaks; paper hanging from ceiling; window-panes out; plastering off; dilapidated conditions; general appearance very bad inside and out; living conditions crowded, ten and twelve in two rooms; no sanitary conveniences; children partly clad and dirty.

"This is the common situation of the Negroes whose economic standing is low and who cannot afford more than the minimum living expenses. The variations are in degree rather than kind. To dwellings in a little better sanitation and repair than those just described, the adjective 'fair' was given."<sup>16</sup>

### Louisville, Kentucky

"The greatest problem in Louisville is that of housing and sanitation. Two-thirds of the houses in which the working class of colored people live are without sewerage connection and are as a result afflicted with the privy vault which is very often found to be overflowing and thus contaminating the entire neighborhood. Garbage in many instances is left uncollected and this adds to the disease-breeding plague spots of the community . . ." p. 138.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Martin, Asa E., *Our Negro Population* (M.A. Thesis at William Jewell College, Liberty, Mo.), Kansas City, Franklin Hudson Publishing Company, 1913.

<sup>16</sup> Daves, J. H., *A Social Study of the Colored Population of Knoxville, Tennessee*, Knoxville, The Free Colored Library, 1926.

<sup>17</sup> Ragland, J. M., "The Negro in Louisville," *Southern Workman*, March, 1925, Vol. 54, pp. 137-139.

**Minneapolis, Minnesota**

"When compared with thirteen other northern cities, Minneapolis had in 1920 a relatively small percentage of Negro population; 3,927 . . . of a total population of 380,582, or about 1 per cent.

"One very salient feature of the housing conditions as revealed by the study of 527 families is the absence of overcrowding. Ninety-seven per cent of the homes observed had water; 90 per cent had sewer connection; 95 per cent had gas and 74 per cent electricity."<sup>18</sup>

**New York, New York**

"From September 30, 1920, when there were 1,320,000 suites for tenants in one- and two-room houses, to September 30, 1925, when this number had increased to 1,588,000 or 20 per cent, less than twelve of the total number of houses constructed were available for the colored population of Harlem. The Commission on Housing and Regional Planning in its report of December 23, 1925, stated that the 'amount of new construction within the past three years has been without precedent. It is safe to conclude therefore, that there is no mass shortage today, i.e., if price were no factor, the families in New York City might all find accommodations. However, price in relation to income is the essence of the problem.'

"As a basis for our figures we may give the bases for the decision of the Housing Commission. The standard is one room to serve for kitchen, dining-room and living-room, and not more than two people to each remaining room. On this basis it was found that in the block in Harlem there was a percentage of overcrowded apartments as follows: 1919—3.5 per cent; 1923—4.5 per cent; 1925—3.7 per cent. Since overcrowding is regarded as a measure of extreme congestion, the vast majority of families in New York do not live under the conditions of crowding that fall under the definition as set up in the Commission's report.

"The Commission further holds that it 'cannot state too emphatically the fact, that any housing problem that exists in the white community, exists in exaggerated form in Harlem.' The present problem is not the increase that the Negro, like the white

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<sup>18</sup> Harris, Abram L., *The Negro Population in Minneapolis, A Study of Race Relations*, Minneapolis, Minneapolis Urban League, 1926.

tenant, is forced to pay from year to year, but the enormous premium he has to pay in comparison with white tenants.

“From the statements on the size of households and of the number of rooms in the apartments, some indication may be given of the extent of overcrowding within the apartments. Aside from the standards set by the Commission on overcrowding, other standards may be mentioned. Overcrowding is often considered present when the number of persons exceeds the number of rooms by one-half. Accepting this method as a test we find that 9.9 per cent of the households were overcrowded.

“The recent activity on the part of the Commission on Housing and Regional Planning which stimulated community councils and housing committees in various sections of the city has had its effect upon Harlem. Tenants who were formerly very satisfied with the homes they found available, realized that they were below the average, and proceeded to register their complaints with the Tenement House Department and through the Community Councils. The severe agitation which has taken place in Harlem would lead one to think that everything was not in favor of the tenant, and that no landlord was living up to the standards of decency in providing satisfactory housing conditions.

“Twenty-two per cent of the replies of families stated that the condition of their apartment was ‘good’; 18 per cent stated that it was ‘fair’; 12 per cent did not answer; 48 per cent stated that it was either ‘poor,’ ‘bad,’ or ‘needed cleaning’.”<sup>19</sup>

#### Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

“The background of any picture of the housing of an immigrant people in a city or state is always the housing that exists there at the time of their arrival, particularly the housing of the people of the same economic level as themselves. Hence, in any discussion of the living accommodations of the Negro families which have recently come to Pennsylvania there must be kept clearly in mind the picture of conditions which existed in Pennsylvania when these newcomers entered the state. Let us review these conditions:

First—There was the housing shortage, affecting a large percentage of the low-wage-earning and renting class.

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<sup>19</sup> Reid, Ira DeA., *Twenty-four Hundred Negro Families in Harlem*, New York, New York Urban League, 1927.

Second—There was an unchecked and increasingly vicious rent profiteering being practiced upon this same group.

Third—In a measure because of the housing shortage and rent profiteering, though equally due to other causes, there was a widespread prevalence of insanitation and congested occupancy.

Fourth—Racial attractions and antipathies were reacting upon special groups, including Pennsylvania Negroes, and forcing segregation . . . p. 46.

"The background of the picture of Negro migrant housing in Philadelphia is practically the same as that for the state at large. We have our housing shortage, affecting tens of thousands of the low-wage-earning class. We have our mounting rentals, exceeding in many instances, by over 100 per cent, rentals charged for the same accommodations in 1914. We have widespread overcrowding and insanitation. We have old houses inherited by the poor as cheaper rental properties but miserable in their fitting for human habitation. Into a large number of these buildings and areas, a Negro population already had been forced to move. Thus, when the new Negro immigrant came to the city, he found his choice restricted and he went where doubling-up was understood and taken for granted.

"We do not know how many newcomers have thus obtained residence in Philadelphia, though from several surveys that have been made it is estimated the number approximates 10,500 per year for the past two years. Some found individual houses in the newer areas opening up to colored occupancy. But by far the majority went into the old areas. A spot map of migrant families, reported to the Migration Committee and made in the office of the Housing Association, shows that the bulk of the known residences of these migrants was in the old and densely populated Negro centers in the Middle City, South Philadelphia, and West Philadelphia . . . p. 47.

"High rents accompany almost every case of overcrowding. Usually one-room apartments are sublet on a weekly basis and seldom does the rent fall as low as \$3.50 per week. Rents on such a basis of occupancy vary, but one house of six rooms returned a rental of \$81 a month; another, of nine rooms, netted \$108 a month; a house of twelve rooms brought in \$224 a month; one six-room house which rented in 1914 to one family for \$14 a month was changed into three apartments, by the addition of a sink and toilet on the second floor, and now brings in \$100 a

month; and still another house rented to a migrant for \$65 a month was sublet by him to thirty-eight persons, nearly all migrants, so as to return him almost \$100 a week. It has one toilet in the yard and no bath or toilet in the house.

"It would be only repetition to say that insanitation and incomplete sanitary equipment go with such occupancy conditions. To the one-room occupancy anyone making an enumeration of the housing evils attending such living would have to add cellar and attic living, obstructed drainage, disrepair, accumulation of rubbish and filth, and other nuisances unmentionable. One day's inspection of 63 such houses uncovered 90 violations of the Housing Law." p. 47.<sup>20</sup>

### Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

"The deplorable housing of migrant families is shown in Table VI.<sup>21</sup> Of the 157 families investigated, 77, or 49 per cent, live in one room each. Thirty-three, or 21 per cent, live in two-room apartments, and only 47 families, or 30 per cent, live in apartments of three or more rooms each.

"Of these 47 families, 38 kept roomers or boarders, totaling 131, or an average of 3.5 roomers per family. Eighty-one of the total of 139 houses inspected had water inside the house, while 58 houses secured water from yard or street hydrants or from neighbors. Only 34 of the total were equipped with interior toilet facilities; the rest had outside toilets. Of the latter, 42 had no sewerage connections, and used filthy, unsanitary vaults . . . p. 15.

### Rents Paid by 142 Families Investigated

\$10 per month	.....	41
15 per month	.....	60
20 per month	.....	18
25 per month	.....	13
Over \$25	.....	10

"The sections formerly designated as Negro quarters, have been long since congested beyond capacity by the influx of newcomers, and a score of new colonies have sprung up in hollows and ravines, on hill slopes and along river banks, by railroad tracks and mill-yards. In many instances the dwellings are those which have been

<sup>20</sup> Newman, Bernard J., "The Housing of Negro Immigrants in Pennsylvania," *Opportunity*, February, 1924, Vol. 2, pp. 46-48.

<sup>21</sup> See p. 10, *op. cit.*

abandoned by foreign white people since the beginning of the present war. In some cases they are structures once condemned by the City Bureau of Sanitation, but opened again only to accommodate the influx from the South. Very few of these houses are equipped with gas. Coal and wood are used both for cooking and heating . . ." p. 16.<sup>22</sup>

"1. The total number of families (studied) was 216, averaging in size 4.9 persons.

"2. The average number of rooms per dwelling was 4.2.

"3. There was an average of 1.86 persons per sleeping room.

"4. The average rent for all dwellings was \$32.76; distributed by rooms the average rentals were as follows:

2 rooms .....	\$18.77	6 rooms .....	\$44.68
3 rooms .....	25.09	7 rooms .....	48.11
4 rooms .....	31.12	8 rooms .....	64.00
5 rooms .....	35.84	9 rooms .....	79.00

The average rent per room was \$7.78. This is lower than Hall's average of \$8.93 in 1929, and higher than Wright's average of \$7.39 in 1927.

"5. Thirty-five per cent of the families had lodgers. These lodgers paid an average weekly rent of \$4.21.

"6. Fifty-two per cent of the families had children under 16 years of age.

"7. The average number of children per family unit having children was 2.59.

"8. The average number of children per total family units was 1.35.

"9. The four-room house was the predominant size, while 18.7 per cent were of less than four rooms and 26.9 per cent more than that number.

"10. Conveniences were distributed as follows:

Per cent of families having gas.....	93.0
Per cent of families having electricity.....	80.0
Per cent of families having bath.....	62.7
Per cent of families having hot water.....	64.3
Per cent of families having toilets in hall and basement.....	16.5
Per cent of families having toilets in yard.....	17.4
Per cent of families having toilets in house.....	66.1
Per cent of families having water supply outside.....	7.3

"11. Of the toilets located within the house 63.1 per cent were

<sup>22</sup> Epstein, Abraham, *The Negro Migrant in Pittsburgh*, (A Study in Social Economics), published under the supervision of the School of Economics, University of Pittsburgh, 1918.

used by one family, 28.1 per cent by two families, and 6.1 per cent by three or more families. Of those toilets located without the house 42 per cent were used by one family, 38 per cent by two families, 20 per cent by three or more families." p. 32.<sup>23</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

"A study made in the fall and winter of 1928-29 is based on an analysis of 218 families and 227 dwellings in the Hill District. Its findings may be summarized as follows:

1. Negro migrants have moved into the same sections, and often the same houses, occupied by practically all new groups on first coming to Pittsburgh.
2. The average size of the Negro family is 4.3 persons.
3. The average number of rooms in Negro dwellings was 3.79; the average number of persons per room was 1.05; the average number of families per dwelling was 1.13.
4. Of the 227 dwellings studied 21 had outside toilets; 14 had outside water; 153 had baths; 217 had gas; 182 had electric lights; 56 had laundry tubs; and 14 had furnaces.
5. The average weekly earnings of the male heads of families were \$27.09. The maximum weekly wage was \$68.75—the minimum, \$10.
6. The average weekly income of the 227 families was \$32.02. This amount includes earnings in addition to those of the heads of families. They were augmented as follows:

By wives' work.....	41 families
By income from lodgers.....	73 families
By alimony .....	1 family

The median weekly income was \$31, the minimum, \$10, and the maximum \$85.

7. The average rent per room per month was \$8.93. The range of rents was from a minimum of \$11.50 for a two-room dwelling to a maximum of \$100 for a twelve-room dwelling. The median monthly rent was \$38.

8. These Negro families pay an average of 24.4 per cent of their (total family) income for rent. For the two-room dwellings it is 20.8 per cent; three-room, 25.8 per cent; four rooms, 29.3 per cent; five rooms, 29 per cent; six rooms, 30.9 per cent."<sup>24</sup>

### Richmond, Virginia

"The differences here brought out are due to a number of circumstances, some of which are within the control of the Negroes themselves, but for the others the responsibility rests on the white

<sup>23</sup> Reid, Ira DeA., *Social Conditions of the Negro in the Hill District of Pittsburgh*, General Committee on the Hill Survey, Pittsburgh (National Urban League), 1930.

<sup>24</sup> Hall, Wiley A., *Negro Housing and Rents in the Hill District of Pittsburgh*, (M.A. Thesis) University of Pittsburgh, 1929. (Unpublished.)

people, who control the political machinery, and who direct the expenditure of municipal funds . . . p. 46.

"There is a general lack of paving in the Negro residential areas. This fact constitutes a chief cause for complaint and is the reason most generally assigned for the aggressiveness in pushing into white areas which is generally evidenced among the Negroes in Richmond. This was the principal cause assigned for the spread of the Negro residential area eastward along Leigh, Clay and Marshall Streets. In Fulton, especially, the condition of the streets is such as would not be tolerated in a white community. At certain seasons of the year the slippery red mud on the hill-sides on which the Negroes live in this section offers such obstruction to travel that motor vehicles attempt to traverse these streets only at the peril of becoming stuck fast in the mud. Such conditions are perhaps worse and of greater extent in Fulton than in any of the other sections, but unpaved streets, and few sidewalks, rough in dry weather and intolerably muddy and slick in wet weather are the outstanding characteristics of the Negro sections . . ." p. 53.<sup>25</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

"The long tabulations on the sanitary conditions, conveniences, state of repair, and general state of satisfaction of the residents will not be given here, but the figures uncontestedly establish this fact: Negro owners of property take more interest in maintaining their homes in a clean and sanitary condition than do renters. Possibly Negro renters tend to become discouraged because of the few conveniences and poor state of repair. At least two-thirds of the rented houses visited needed essential repairs or alterations. Almost everything seemed to be wrong with the houses: Leaking roofs were mentioned again and again; plastering was down; paper, painting or calcimining was needed everywhere; many porches, fences, gutters were broken; plumbing defects of every kind were noted. A large number of the very old houses in Jackson Ward could only be described as generally dilapidated and hardly fit for human habitation . . ." p. 72.<sup>26</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

"The *News-Leader* today completed an investigation which dis-

<sup>25</sup> Knight, Charles Louis, *Negro Housing in Certain Virginia Cities* (Richmond, Lynchburg and Charlottesville), (University of Virginia, Phelps-Stokes Fellowship Paper No. 8), Richmond, The William Byrd Press, 1927.

<sup>26</sup> "The Negro in Richmond, Virginia," *Report of the Negro Welfare Survey Committee*, Richmond Council of Social Agencies, 1929.

closes that housing conditions among Negroes residing in the poorer sections of Richmond are disgraceful, inhuman, pestilential and in a civic sense entirely too costly to be tolerated by the people of this city.

"The investigation, embracing 483 Negro homes, each of them inspected in minute detail, showed that:

The average Negro home in the poorer sections contains 4 persons, and is supported by an income of \$12.50 per week;

A majority of these homes are old, and at least one-half are in various stages of dilapidation;

Less than one of every eight homes has plumbing facilities inside the house;

Only one in three has a water connection inside the house;

The average home contains less than four rooms;

In 14 per cent of these homes there is neither a kitchen nor a bathroom;

As many as fourteen persons were found living in one three-room shack, and in another home eight persons regularly sleep in the same room;

Filth and squalor obtain in many of these homes;

Unmentionable vice and disease flourish under the conditions existent in the worst of these homes.

"The findings of this investigation, although they picture inhuman, wasteful and deplorable living conditions, were not unknown in Richmond heretofore. Eighteen years ago, after completing a thorough study of housing conditions in Richmond, Gustavus A. Weber declared that there were in Richmond homes 'poorly lighted, unventilated, damp, imperfectly drained, exposed to undue fire peril, in bad repair, vermin infested, disease infested, with unclean surroundings, with insufficient water supply, without toilet accommodations adequate for comfort, cleanliness or privacy, with defective plumbing, with overcrowded rooms, and with cellar tenements'." <sup>27</sup>

### Troy, New York

"The neighborhoods in which the majority of Negroes live are fairly well defined. There are no exclusive Negro areas but the oldest parts of the city in which are found the cheapest rents as well as the most unsatisfactory housing form the sections that include what fully 85 per cent of the population call 'home.'

<sup>27</sup>Corson, John J., III, "Negro Housing in Richmond," *Richmond News-Leader*, September 21 to October 1, 1931.

"An analysis of the conditions of all families, however, showed that out of 99 households,

- 46 had no bathrooms
- 13 had outside toilets
- 24 had no light other than an oil lamp
- 27 showed general housing conditions that were classified as bad.

"The tenants themselves give most effective testimony on the general housing and neighborhood conditions. Though the current depression has caused hardships on tenant as well as owner, the former being unable to pay his rent and the latter unable to collect, the tenants believe that there can be some improvements . . .

"No one remembers when last new houses have been available for Negro renters in Troy. A few Negroes (the estimates range from twelve to fifteen) own or are purchasing real properties valued at \$150,000. In general the homes purchased have not been new."<sup>28</sup>

#### Washington, D. C.

"Unlike most American cities, Washington has no specific geographical localization of its Negro population. Instead of a definitely bounded territory into which almost the entire Negro population is crowded, there are scattered communities which distribute the Negro population throughout practically the entire city . . . p. 57.

"In general, there are two types of houses in which Negro families in Washington live. First, those that are built originally for white people and have been taken over by colored renters or buyers. Second, houses built especially for Negro occupancy. The first type of house is in nearly every instance superior in quality to the latter, and is generally preferred by Negroes who desire durable homes . . ." p. 91.<sup>29</sup>

#### Worcester, Massachusetts

"Worcester has no 'black belt' for her Negro citizens. They live on the East Side and on the West Side and in all sections of the city.

<sup>28</sup> Reid, Ira DeA., *Trojans of Color—A Social Survey of the Negro Population of Troy, N. Y.*, New York, National Urban League, 1931.

<sup>29</sup> Jones, William Henry, *The Housing of Negroes in Washington, D. C.*, Washington, Howard University Press, 1929.



*Courtesy of Housing Committee, Washington Council of Social Agencies*

*Photograph by Richard Carlyle Ball*  
*Conditions of neglect in Negro housing quarters of Washington, D. C., in the immediate vicinity of the Capitol.*



"A trip through the sections largely inhabited by Negroes shows that many of the streets on which these homes face are in a bad state of repair. Many of the homes occupied by Negroes are likewise without some of the sanitary facilities now considered necessary . . ." <sup>30</sup>

## II. Rural Surveys

"The southern farmer is a one crop man and especially is this true of the Negro farmer . . . p. 1.

". . . Up to 1910 the colored farmers had made progress not only in the number of farms which they cultivated but also in climbing the tenant ladder from the position of dependent laborer to that of semi-dependent half-share tenant, and on to a position of third- and fourth-share tenant, independent renter of land, and farm owner. The number of owners had increased in 1910 until 219,000 Negroes owned their land. While there were 161,600 Negro owners in the Southeast in 1910, this number decreased to 145,900 by 1925, indicating a surprising proportion who are losing heart and moving to the city . . . p. 12.

"Thus the depression in the cotton area has not only occasioned a decrease in the number of Negro farmers but has forced the masses, those remaining on the farm, downward in the scale. Here and there it is possible to find farmers who are making money but the majority have been in serious financial straits. The proportion of Negro croppers to the total number of Negro farmers in the extreme southeastern states increased from 39 per cent in 1920 to 46 per cent in 1925. The actual number of croppers remained about the same but their proportion rose sharply because of the striking decrease in the higher classes of tenants. Part of this loss in Negro tenant farmers is made up for by the increase of the white tenant classes in the South. This increase in white tenancy is largely in the class of share tenants who furnish their own animals and implements and farm for two-thirds or three-fourths of the crop. The increase in share tenancy, especially in cropping, is very discouraging. The croppers are those who have no tools or animals and farm chiefly for the money crop, neglecting food and feed crops and the breeding of domestic animals.

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<sup>30</sup> Moss, R. Maurice, *Survey of the Negro Population of Worcester, Mass.*, New York, National Urban League, 1929.

"On the whole, therefore, the picture shown by the period from 1920 to 1925 presents a discouraging situation in the farming of the Negro and of southern agriculture in general. A post-war deflation and a subsequent calamity of overproduction of cotton fell most heavily on the four extreme southeastern cotton states, and especially upon the Negro farmers in those states. The result has been a tremendous loss in agricultural productivity." pp. 13-14.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Woofter, T. J. Jr., *A Study of the Economic Status of the Negro*, Chicago, Julius Rosenwald Fund, 1930. (Mimeographed.)

## APPENDIX II

### SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS IN NEGRO HOUSING

#### HOUSING CONDITIONS AMONG NEGROES IN CHICAGO—WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO JUVENILE DELINQUENCY<sup>1</sup>

A study of housing in relationship to juvenile delinquency may easily lead to deductions that are unwarranted. To avoid fallacious findings a necessary preliminary step is to recognize the multiple factors involved in the total situation. Secondly, units of measurement should be ascertained which may give an evaluation to the respective importance of these factors.

Any discussion, then, of housing among Negroes must recognize more than the physical aspects of the subject. Indeed, even the additional presentation of statistics as to the amount of rent paid, the number of rooms occupied, etc., is not enough. The presentation of such facts may make available added information about life among Negroes. The mere enumeration of such facts, however, does not give understanding. Unless such materials are regarded only as indices and, as such, are regarded only as a unit in the totality of Negro life, fallacious deductions may easily arise.

Behind these formal materials are the memories, the aims, the hopes, the ambitions, and the aspirations of individuals. Moreover, the behavior of the individual can be understood only when considered in relationship to the group of which he is a member. He is inevitably bound up with the mores, the customs and the traditions of the group. True, he may seek to escape the group. But in the process of escape his emancipation from the group tends to secularize his behavior. He undergoes a period of disorganization. And in the course of achieving status in a new group his response to the total situation depends upon the degree of reorganization and the rapidity with which it takes place.

To understand the individual, the group, or the community, recognition of cultural differences within the racial group is essential. Social, economic, and occupational levels, for example,

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<sup>1</sup> This paper was prepared for the Group on Social and Economic Factors of the Committee on Negro Housing by Earl R. Moses, Department of Research and Records, Chicago Urban League, and was submitted by that group as an appendix to the committee's report.

are indices through which these cultural differences may be measured. Further, the selective and segregative processes operating within the group make intelligible these differences.

In the course of this study an attempt is made to show the relationship between delinquency and housing, differences in Negro communities, how these differences are reflected in physical aspects of housing and, last, how these factors all contribute to the prevalence or absence of delinquency in a community. Emphasis, then, shall be on delinquency in community relationships, keeping in mind, however, the importance of housing in this relationship.

Certain questions are of primary importance in studying the relationship of delinquency to the social and economic factors involved in the housing of Negroes. The answer to these questions will make intelligible certain fundamental aspects of the problem. Some of these questions are: What is the nature of the problem of delinquency and crime among Negroes? What are Negro communities? What are the characteristics of such communities? Are there differences in these communities? If so, why? How are Negro delinquents distributed? Is the distribution static or changing? How far is the Negro delinquent the product of the Negro community?

Answers to these questions are sought, in part at least, in the materials embodied in this paper.

### I. The Problem of Delinquency and Crime

The rapid increase in delinquency and crime among Negroes in Chicago in recent years has focused attention on this racial group. Relative to the increase in delinquency among Negroes, a state parole officer writes, in part:

"The sensational increase in juvenile Negro delinquency gives the greatest concern to all good citizenship as having a far-reaching effect along moral and economic lines . . .

"The number of white boys has remained practically at a standstill, if it has not decreased, while that of Negro boys shows an increase far out of proportion to race statistics."<sup>2</sup>

Turning to the field of adult crime, one encounters anything from conservative estimates to wild speculations as to the extent of adult crime. In the latter connection the statement has frequently been made that, although the Negroes compose only about 5 per

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<sup>2</sup> Communication from M. H. Cone, State of Illinois Parole Officer.

cent of the total population in Chicago, they contribute nearly 50 per cent of the homicides.

As a background for the discussion of social and economic factors in housing among Negro families in which there are delinquents, it is desirable that cognizance should first be taken of the nature and extent of the problem of delinquency and crime.

### Juvenile Delinquency

The increase in delinquency among Negroes has not only been recorded in Chicago but has been noted as well in other large centers of population. The increase has been attributed largely to the influx of southern migrants into cities above the Mason and Dixon line. In popular discussions some even attribute the increase to the transplantation of actual delinquents from the South, who merely continue their delinquent activities in a new situation.

Patient investigations have revealed that the increase in juvenile delinquency has been largely a matter of the segregation of Negroes into areas of deterioration. An excellent summary of the situation is contained in the following excerpt:

"The real problem . . . of colored people of Chicago, as in all northern cities, lies in the fact of their segregation. While they do not occupy all the worst streets and live in all unsanitary houses in Chicago, what is known as the 'Black Belt' is altogether forbidding and demoralizing. The huddling together of good and bad, compelling the decent element of colored people to witness brazen display of vice . . . are trying conditions."<sup>3</sup>

In addition, attention is called to the fact that a research project<sup>4</sup> involving an intensive study of delinquency among Negroes reveals that the increase in delinquency follows the same fundamental processes for any newcomer. This is true regardless of racial or national identity. Shaw states a fundamental aspect of the problem as follows:

"In such cases" (referring to population influx into Chicago) "the proc-

<sup>3</sup> Williams, Fannie B., *Social Bonds in the Black Belt of Chicago*, an M. A. thesis in the University of Chicago library, which, in turn, quotes from the "Douglas," the history of a local community in Chicago, by the Social Science Research Committee of the University. These volumes (the history of local communities in Chicago) are available only in the library of the University of Chicago.

<sup>4</sup> *Juvenile Delinquency among Negroes in Chicago*, a research project now being carried on by the writer under the auspices of the Chicago Urban League and the Local Community Research Committee of the University of Chicago.

ess has been the same. The most recent immigrants enter and secure a footing by invading the areas of lowest rank in the deteriorated areas adjacent to the Loop and the large industrial centers. In time another group enters and displaces the population ahead of it and pushes it out into what may be called areas of second settlement."<sup>6</sup>

It may be accepted without question that the physical aspects of housing contribute decidedly to the character of a community, and the foregoing excerpts suggest that housing conditions are a potent factor in determining the degree of social organization in the community, and consequently community norms of behavior.

A detailed analysis of what are the housing conditions and social and economic levels of different communities will be discussed later. Our present interest revolves about the growth and extent of delinquency among Negroes. This will afford an opportunity of securing an adequate background to study the relationship between increase in delinquency and the social and economic levels in community life. After all, the problem of housing of the juvenile delinquent resolves itself primarily into the problem of housing as it relates to his adult parents. The juvenile delinquent is not faced with the responsibility of family income as a means of sustenance. His is not, in general, the problem of a job, of securing meat and bread. He is a consumer. However, he shares the conditions to which his parents are subjected. Their condition, in turn, depends upon their level of income.

**Population Growth and Increase of Delinquency.** In 1900, the Negro population of Chicago numbered 30,150, or 1.8 per cent of the total population. Of the 8,056 male delinquents, ten to seventeen years of age, brought before the Juvenile Court of Cook County (Illinois) during the years 1900 to 1906,<sup>6</sup> 278, or 3.5 per cent, were Negroes.<sup>7</sup> The Negro population of Chicago in 1910 numbered 44,103, or 2 per cent of the total population.

<sup>6</sup> Shaw, Clifford R., et. al., *Delinquency Areas*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1929, p. 17.

<sup>6</sup> The series of 1900-1906 and 1917-1923 are not to be confused with Table I. The former deals with individuals (boys only) against whom one or more petitions have been filed. The latter deals with *final orders* of the court disposing of each case (boys and girls), and therefore, exceeds the former.

<sup>7</sup> The writer is indebted to Clifford R. Shaw, of the Institute for Juvenile Research, for use of original data dealing with 1900-1906 and 1917-1923 series. For discussion of these data by Mr. Shaw see "Housing and the Community, Home Repair and Remodeling," *Publications of the President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership*, Washington, 1932, Vol. VIII, Part I.

Negro delinquents, however, had increased to 102 or 6.2 per cent of the total delinquents (1,636) for that year. There were 8,141 male delinquents, ten to seventeen years of age, brought before the Juvenile Court of Cook County during the years 1917 to 1923.

Of that number 541, or 6.6 per cent, were Negroes. In the decade from 1910 to 1920 the Negro population had increased to 109,594 or 4.1 per cent of the total population. In 1920 Negro delinquents had increased to 310 or 12.2 per cent of the total delinquents (2,550) for that year. By 1930 the Negro population had increased to approximately 6.5 per cent of the total population.<sup>8</sup> In the decade Negro delinquents had increased to 22.8 per cent (579) of the total (2,538) delinquents for the year. A comparison of the population increase with the increase in delinquency (Table I) shows that in recent years the increase in delinquents has been, relatively, far greater. Table I shows the increase in Negro delinquents appearing before the Cook County Juvenile Court (Chicago).

**Table I. Total Yearly Delinquents Before the Cook County Juvenile Court, Showing Total Negroes and Per Cent to Total Delinquents, by Five Year Intervals**

Year	Total Delinquents	Total Negroes	Per Cent Negroes
1905.....	2,473	117	4.7
1910.....	1,636	102	6.2
1915.....	2,912	216	7.4
1920.....	2,550	310	12.1
1925.....	2,513	424	16.4
1930.....	3,095	657	21.2

There are other indices that may be used to indicate the increase in delinquency among Negroes. The foregoing, however, is considered enough.

**Offenders of Boys' Court Age.** The number of individual Negro male offenders appearing in the Boys' Court<sup>9</sup> exceeds the number of delinquents appearing in the Juvenile Court. Nevertheless, the percentage of Negroes to the total cases shows a

<sup>8</sup> The final revision figures (official) are not available at this writing.

<sup>9</sup> The Boys' Court handles cases of boys from seventeen to twenty-one years of age. However, adults sometime appear in this court when arrested for offenses involving those who normally appear there.

striking similarity in both groups. Even so the problem of the older boy is more acute because of the feeling of the futility of "going straight." The difficulty of securing jobs and lack of adequate housing facilities complicate the problem of adjustment for these boys. Even when a job is secured the level of income is so low that life for them is on a minimum subsistence level.

The number of Negro boys appearing in the Boys' Court has been estimated in lay discussions as high as 40 per cent of the total number in court. The actual percentage is far lower. The number and percentage for the past four years are as follows:<sup>10</sup>

**Table II. Percentage of Negro Boys of Total Cases in Boys' Court, Chicago, Four Year Period.**

Year	Total Cases	Negro Cases	Per Cent Negroes
1927.....	6,902	800	11.6
1928.....	5,680	960	16.9
1929.....	6,209	889	14.3
1930.....	6,400	1,347	21.0

**Housing and Income.** An aspect of housing that receives little or no attention in the large centers of population is that of housing for unattached boys of sixteen years of age and over. It is generally assumed that the Y. M. C. A. and kindred organizations are or should be the center of activities of unattached boys and young men. There is ample observational and some statistical evidence that such organizations reach but a small percentage of such cases. The lack of knowledge, training and experience, lack in range of social contacts, and lack of individual economic resources are all contributing factors which prevent such organizations from serving many unattached boys.

It is the opinion of some persons engaged in social service work among Negro boys appearing before the Municipal Court, Boys' Division, in the City of Chicago, that a considerable portion of crime among those appearing in this court is due to situations arising out of lack of proper facilities for housing on the one hand,

<sup>10</sup> The figures were supplied by Joseph D. Bryan, social worker among Negro boys in the Boys' Court. The yearly total of cases is approximate. The total number of Negro cases is accurate.

and the extremely small income on the other. In the course of a study of juvenile delinquency among Negroes in Chicago, the writer has interviewed boys who have appeared in the Boys' Court. In many instances their stories have substantiated one another. These cases point to the fact that jobs are almost impossible to secure and when secured pay barely enough to cover room rent, board and a minimum of incidentals.

There are two sources in Chicago through which these boys are generally housed. The first is the Hope Haven League. This is an organization headed by an individual who has had a long prison record and who, having renounced any further life in crime, has devoted himself to the establishment of a home where boys just released from prison may have an opportunity of getting a fresh start in life. A boy is allowed free room and board until he can secure work. In some instances this contact covers only a period of a few days. Others, however, must rely upon the resources of this organization for an indefinite period. Support of this organization comes from popular subscriptions and the resources of its founder. The second source of housing for those of Boys' Court age is in private homes or cheap hotels and is designed to care for those having jobs. Placements are most frequently made through Joseph D. Bryan, social worker among Negroes in the Boys' Court. The following quotation from a communication from Mr. Bryan suggests the nature of the problem:

"The average wage for the average boy which we have had to work with is \$10, ranging from \$8 to \$12. The average room and the kind of place that is required or suggested ranges from between \$4 and \$6 a week. The payment of \$4 a week for his room, \$1.20 for his carfare, \$3.50 for his meal ticket, makes it almost impossible for a boy to keep out of trouble. The average home in which a boy is placed does not measure up to the standard. The average person whose spirit is fine is seldom able, educationally or religiously, to help the boy . . ."

**Attempts at Adjustment and Prevention.** Until recent months the social service machinery of the Boys' Court would not allow for an intensive follow-up of the cases appearing therein. Practically all of the social work done was through various cultural or religious groups, arranging for workers to take care of boys identified with their own interests. Thus the Polish group or the Catholic group would have workers to care for members of their racial or religious identification. For the past three years, work

among Negro boys has been done by Joseph D. Bryan. The beginnings of this work were voluntary and later secured religious backing. Excerpts from a communication from Mr. Bryan indicate something of the scope of the problem as it relates to housing and crime, and the methods used for adjustment and prevention:

"In cases where boys do not have homes, friends, jobs, these are supposed to be secured. An attempt is made to study the case more thoroughly; the boy is placed under supervision. This is especially true of those boys who do not have homes, parents or friends and are not linked up with churches or other agencies or organizations. We can get their family background, early reactions in life, etc., which makes it easier to help them find their niche. Jobs according to their fitness are usually secured. We secure clothing for them, then we find a place where they can stay and look out for themselves. But we still follow up the case of each boy for about six months or a year. If, after that time, we feel they are capable of looking out for themselves, we do what most agencies do, dismiss the case subject to reopening if necessary. No supervision case is disposed of until the boy's adjustment is considered permanent . . . ."

In the course of contacts with hundreds of Negro boys appearing in the Boys' Court, Mr. Bryan is of the opinion that many of the boys are victims of circumstance. This is especially true in many cases where the boy is brought out of the South as a chauffeur for a private family or more often working in such capacity for a traveling salesman. In either case the employer promises a great deal to the boy as an inducement to enter such service. In some instances the boy drives his employer as far as a town or city near Chicago, where either of two general patterns of behavior is followed. Sometimes the boy is induced to put what little money he may have in the care of his employer. Later the ruse is employed of sending the boy into a restaurant to eat and while he is eating his employer drives away, leaving him completely stranded. In other cases, the employer gives the boy five or ten dollars and advises him that his services are no longer needed.<sup>11</sup> Left on his own resources and in a situation to which his past experience totally unsuits him, it is only a question of time before, being completely stranded, the boy, through sheer necessity, is driven to petty crime for a livelihood, or in other cases is arrested as a vagrant.

<sup>11</sup> Mr. Bryan reports that numerous cases of each type come to his attention yearly. The writer has talked with two boys falling under the first type of situation and one under the latter.

One of the important needs then revolves about the unattached Negro boy sixteen years of age and over. While this problem does not have to do with housing in the sense that surveys usually deal with it, it is, nevertheless, a real and acute problem. As a matter of assisting in adjustment to urban life in the North and a means of crime prevention, some cognizance of this problem is necessary. The establishment of a hotel, or boarding arrangements, comparable to the needs would go a long way toward alleviating a potential crime situation in the life of boys thus exploited.

**Efforts at Housing.** An effort to fulfill the need of such housing facilities is in process of organization. Joseph D. Bryan is sponsoring such a movement. He is attempting to interest organizations and philanthropic-minded people of means to support the establishment of a boys' hotel which will care for several hundred boys at a time. According to his plans, in connection with this hotel a social service program is planned which will meet the physical, recreational, educational, and all other needs of the boy. The recreational program is to parallel that of the Y. M. C. A., the chief difference in the two organizations being that the boys' hotel is designed for those of extremely limited economic means or no means whatsoever. In addition, the psychological aspect of the problem peculiar to the boy who feels that he does not fit into the "Y" scheme is met in this arrangement. Attempts are to be made to secure work that will fit the preparation of the individual on the one hand, and his desire for certain types of work on the other hand. In any event the boy is to have a home and the resources of the entire hotel, paying only that amount which his income allows.

#### The Problem of the Adult Offender

As serious as the situation is among juvenile and older boy offenders, the problem of crime among Negro adults in Chicago presents an even more dismal situation. The problem among adults rests not only upon the percentage to the total number of arrests and convictions but also upon the large share that Negroes contribute to serious offenses. In addition, Negro females contribute an exceedingly disproportionate percentage in crime among females.

**Extent of Crime Among Adults.** There is need for great caution in the use of statistics bearing on adult crime. The lack

of uniform entries, methods of reporting crimes, the personnel, are factors which illustrate the need of such caution. Nevertheless, the Police Department Annual Reports<sup>12</sup> offer perhaps the best index to the extent of crime. Their reports on the more serious offenses of manslaughter and murder are perhaps even more reliable than statistics on misdemeanors.

The percentage of Negroes arrested, classified by male and female, to total arrests in Chicago is presented in Table III. In general, the yearly percentage of increase<sup>13</sup> for both sexes has been steadily on the up-grade. In only four years since 1914 have

Table III. Persons Arrested and Arraigned before the Municipal and Criminal Courts of Chicago, by Five Year Intervals and Per Cent Negroes.

Year	Male			Female		
	All Persons	Negroes	Per Cent Negroes	All Persons	Negroes	Per Cent Negroes
1915.....	99,954	6,676	6.7	14,671	2,832	19.3
1920.....	79,730	8,696	10.9	7,467	1,160	15.5
1925.....	246,719	26,000	10.5	17,775	5,155	29.0
1929*.....	170,890	37,207	21.8	24,109	11,599	48.1

\* Report for 1930 unpublished at the time of the preparation of this paper.

there been fluctuations showing a slight decrease from the preceding year.

Negro males composed 6.7 per cent (6,676) of the total male arrests (99,954) in 1915. Negro females, in the same year, composed 19.3 per cent (2,832) of the total female arrests (14,671). The yearly percentage of the total number, for both males and females, has shown a steady increase, except the fluctuations indicated above. By 1929 Negro males composed 21.8 per cent (37,207) and Negro females 48.1 per cent (11,599) of the respective total male (170,890) and female (24,109) arrests. In the course of the fifteen-year period the Negro population more than

<sup>12</sup> The figures pertaining to adult crime are, unless otherwise indicated, from the Police Department Annual Reports, City of Chicago. The numbers include Boys' Court cases.

<sup>13</sup> Percentages for each year, male and female, since 1914, have been computed by the writer.

doubled, while in the same period the percentage of increase in arrests for males more than tripled, and almost tripled for the females. The percentage of the latter was virtually half of the total arrests.

By dividing total arrests into two groups, (1) arrests for misdemeanors, and (2) arrests for felonies, a clearer picture is obtained of crime among Negroes.

The percentage of increase in arrests for misdemeanors is not as great as for total arrests over a comparable period. The increase and fluctuations in the early years of the period are almost identical, whereas the percentage of increase in misdemeanors in the later years of the period has not kept pace. The percentage of convictions for misdemeanors, however, has been more constant, both in steadiness and range of increase. The percentages of arrests and convictions of Negro males in 1915 were identical. The arrests for misdemeanors by 1929 had risen to 11.3 per cent, while convictions had risen to 17.8 per cent. The percentage of arrests and convictions of Negro females in the same period was higher and more constant in the increase. In 1915 the Negro female arrests for misdemeanors were 19.5 per cent of the total female arrests for such charges, while convictions were 24.6 per cent of the total. By 1929 Negro female arrests were 49.4 per cent of the total, while convictions rose to 53.9 per cent of the total female convictions.

Arrests and convictions for felonies are a better index to the extent of crime than comparable data for misdemeanors. The more serious nature of the crimes, the greater care in investigations and in recording data, are contributing factors in making felonies a more reliable index to the extent of crime. The percentage of Negro male arrests for felonies to total arrests for felonies has risen from 8.3 per cent in 1915 to 22.3 per cent in 1929. The percentage of convictions has been even higher, rising from 10 per cent in 1915 to 28.4 in 1929. While numerous popular reasons are ascribed for the increase among Negroes such as (1) Negroes are more readily arrested than whites, and (2) they cannot as easily furnish bail or hire good lawyers, we are here interested primarily in the extent of crime. Negro female arrests and convictions for felonies in general are much lower than for the males. In 1915 Negro females composed 17.1 per cent of the total female arrests for felonies as compared with 26.4 per cent of such arrests

in 1929. The percentage of convictions in 1914 was 12.8 as against 16.3 per cent in 1929.

**Table IV. Ratio of Homicides by Negroes to Total Homicides, Chicago, 1921-1928.**

Year	Murder			Manslaughter			Felonious Homicides*		
	Total Cases	Negro Cases	Per Cent Negroes	Total Cases	Negro Cases	Per Cent Negroes	Total Cases	Negro Cases	Per Cent Negroes
1921.....	137	20	14.6	69	17	24.6			
1922.....	138	31	22.5	92	40	43.5			
1923.....	136	38	27.9	97	53	54.6			
1924.....	180	53	29.4	127	76	59.8			
1925.....	199	50	25.1	122	75	61.5			
1926.....	189	50	26.5	111	66	59.5			
1927.....							301	118	39.2
1928.....							367	155	42.2

\* Murders and manslaughters combined in annual reports.

The percentage of Negroes arrested for murder and manslaughter presents an apprehensive aspect of crime among Negroes. The yearly percentage of Negroes charged with murder and manslaughter is presented in Table IV. Considered in terms of the relative proportion to the total population and of felonious homicides per 100,000 nativity population, the Negro ranks first. However, a mitigating circumstance for Negroes is the fact that the identity of the Negro race is invariably made known, whereas "unknown" cases would raise the percentage of other major groups. Even so, unless all "unknown" cases belonged to one major group, Negroes would still rank first.

Thus far materials have been presented to indicate the extent of the problem of delinquency and crime. Attention will next be focused on the geographical distribution of Negro delinquents in Chicago.

In the light of previous studies <sup>14</sup> it is assumed that the distribution of delinquents may be used as an index to the character of communities. There are, certainly, numerous other indices that are available. Later, however, a canvass of the income levels of families in which there are delinquents will form an important part

<sup>14</sup> Shaw, Clifford R., et al., *Delinquency Areas*; Frazier, E. Franklin, *The Negro Family in Chicago*; and Moses, Earl R., *Juvenile Delinquency Among Negroes in Chicago* (now nearing completion).

of the materials. The distribution of delinquents, then, takes on added significance for our purpose.

## II. The Geographical Distribution of Negro Delinquents

The growth, expansion and increased density of Negro juvenile delinquency in Chicago follow closely kindred developments in the Negro population increase. However interesting the historical aspects of such a story may be, interest here centers about the present situation. Discussion, then, is confined to the most recent data available, eliminating reference to the historical aspects of such increases.

The majority of the Negro population of Chicago reside in an area popularly designated as the "Black Belt." Within the "Belt" life varies markedly and changes are constantly in evidence. Cognizance of the dynamic character of the "Belt" is, after all, fundamental to an understanding of Negro life therein.

The Negro population is to a great extent concentrated within a large area extending from Sixteenth Street on the north to Sixty-ninth Street on the south, and from Wentworth Avenue on the west to Cottage Grove Avenue on the east. The area outlined extends approximately seven miles in length and is from a mile to a mile and a half in width. While the majority of the Negro population live within this area others have invaded adjacent territory. There are, in addition, satellite communities of Negroes in other sections of the city. Foremost in these satellite groups are the Negro population along Lake Street, those in the old "Ghetto" along Maxwell Street, and the Morgan Park community.

How are Negro delinquents scattered in these communities? What differences in community life does their distribution indicate?

Distribution of both Negro male and female delinquents for the year 1929 shows a high degree of concentration in certain areas. When compared with earlier series (not included) there is evidence of a definite tendency to push farther southward. Population data, by small areas, which would allow the computation of the ratio of Negro delinquents to total delinquents by age groups are not available. However, all indications are that the present chief delinquency areas are from just above Thirty-ninth Street to Fifty-

fifth Street, and in the Lake Street and Maxwell Street districts.<sup>15</sup>

Although the distribution of delinquents is used as an index to the character of communities, caution is needed in generalizing therefrom. This is especially true in its relationship to housing. Indeed, areas characterized by the extreme of physical deterioration may not be the chief contributors to delinquency. The invasion of business has driven the population farther out. So that, instead, the areas that are the chief contributors to delinquency, as well indeed to other pathological conditions, are likely to be those areas in process of decided change. Here the processes of social and individual disorganization and reorganization are extremely active. Changes, therefore, are rapid.

The foregoing is presented merely to indicate the distribution of Negro delinquents, showing the differences within areas. How the extent of delinquency may be regarded as an index to the character of a community will be made clearer in the material embodied in Section V of this appendix, p. 183.

### III. Economic Levels of Income among Negroes

Occupational types and economic levels of income offer a casual index to the problems of economic and social maladjustment among Negroes. All cases involving maladjustment, of course, may not be traced directly to these sources. In individual instances the problem of intelligent spending is a potent factor. Nevertheless, as a racial group the Negro must face the problem of low income as against high, if not exorbitant, rent.

Emphasis in this section will be placed on the economic income of the "average" Negro and those at the lower economic level. A second emphasis will be on the average income at different occupational levels. Passing attention only will be given to the highly skilled worker and the professional individual. This position is based on the assumption that the intelligence level required in such occupational types, plus the social and economic resources available, permit considerable freedom in determining, with deliberate choice, the relationship of income to rent. The effort, then, is to see the

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<sup>15</sup> Lack of funds prevented the making of maps showing the actual home location of each delinquent. In addition, the 1930 Federal Census data by census tracts for Chicago are not yet available. The calculation of the percentage of delinquency for areas, on a basis of the same age and sex population, is far more significant than mere numbers of delinquents found in each area.

average and lower economic levels among Negroes, with the consequent standards of living possible at those levels.

Popular and technical discussions about the Negro worker have centered recently in calling attention to the losses that Negroes have sustained in various lines of employment. Such discussions have reached almost the point of hysteria. A careful check of the facts probably would show that the losses sustained have been primarily at the lower occupational levels. The highly skilled and professional types have probably made creditable, if not unprecedented, gains. The losses at the lower occupational levels have been occasioned by the entrance of white workers into lines heretofore considered too menial for their consideration. Economic necessity has thus broken down the prejudiced attitudes that have existed toward certain types of work. As competition becomes keener further losses to Negro workers appear on the horizon. How can the losses be offset? What is being done along this line?

Attitudes of white employers toward the employment of Negroes range from those who report most unsatisfactorily about Negro employees to those who are enthusiastic and who praise the Negro worker in highest terms. A placement secretary of wide experience in the placement of Negro workers in industry reports the following reasons given for the nonemployment of Negroes:<sup>16</sup>

1. Lack of skill;
2. They (Negro workers) lack long experience;
3. Unreliable;
4. Opposed greatly by unions.

In other cases white employers simply state that they wish to experiment with white workers, or that "white workers won't work with Negroes" and give kindred explanations.

The types of situations mentioned above are in marked contrast to the experience of other white employers. Numerous communications testifying to the satisfactory services of Negroes could be cited. The following excerpt from a communication may be regarded as typical at least in idea and content, though exceeding other documents in range of enthusiasm. E. C. Otis, Superintendent, Beaver Products Company, writes:

"Many of the manufacturers have an idea that the only place Negro labor can be used is as porters, housemen and janitors. From my experience

<sup>16</sup> Excerpt from a communication from Mrs. Martha Wilson-Edwards, Placement Secretary, Chicago Urban League.

with Negro labor I find that they can do anything a white man can do when given the same consideration and the same opportunities. I have handled all classes of men and find the Negro laborer, both skilled and unskilled, will give a firm the same cooperation that the white man does. I find them just as observing and just as quick to learn and they will work for a firm's interest equally as well as a white man. There isn't a manufacturing plant, barring none, with the proper supervision, that Negro labor cannot be used in and the plants operated efficiently. Seventy-five per cent of my help is colored labor. Competitors in our same lines visit this plant and tell me that I have one of the best organizations they have ever seen. Everyone is working in harmony, production is rolling along smoothly and there is no confusion in any department. I can truthfully say that I haven't a Negro worker who is not supporting me 100 per cent. When I was appointed executive of this plant there was approximately 25 per cent Negro labor, and the plant a losing proposition. Today, with 75 per cent Negro help it is a paying proposition and one of the best plants in this division. I think this is an answer to Negro labor. From the bottom of the list with 25 per cent Negro help to the head of the list with 75 per cent Negro help."<sup>27</sup>

The foregoing communication attests the worth of the Negro in industry. It reflects the ability of Negro labor when given the opportunity, as well as convinces the white employer that production need not slacken because of employing Negroes.

Nevertheless, however enthusiastic individual white employers are of Negro labor, unless that enthusiasm is reflected in all situations with wages equal to those paid white workers, the Negro is at a disadvantage. In short, enthusiasm minus economic equality for the same piece and quality of work is exploitation. One with considerable experience in placement work writes:

"In visiting power-machine factories I have found colored and white girls working side by side performing the same operation but paid different wages. While they are paid on piece work basis colored girls producing the same quantity of work receive from \$10 to \$15 while white girls receive from \$18 to \$20 . . . . In domestic service work, it has been our experience that white maids usually get about \$5 more per week than Negro maids."

Assuming equality of work, the best answer to both sides of the questions is in the actual income levels of Negroes in different occupational classifications.

#### Negro Female Workers

Data relating to income levels among Negro female workers presented herein are based on the wages of 941 Negro females

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<sup>27</sup> Quoted from the annual report of H. N. Robinson, Employment Secretary, Chicago Urban League.

*Photograph by George H. Van Anda*

Nursery in the Paul Laurence Dunbar Apartments in New York City. Working mothers in this cooperative apartment may leave their children under competent supervision at the nursery during the hours when they must be away from home.





placed by the Industrial Department of the Chicago Urban League during 1930.<sup>18</sup> It is not enough merely to note the income levels in occupational types. Many of the women are heads of homes, either because of death, divorce, desertion, separation, or for other reasons. In many cases there is added responsibility because of children to be supported. Is there any wonder that these women experience difficulty in making "both ends meet"? Indeed, that would be impossible except for employing various means to that end. Rooming in crowded quarters, the sharing of household expenses by relatives or close friends, or taking a roomer into the home are typical means used to meet expenses. In any case, the necessity of employing such means adds to economic and social maladjustment, inevitably affecting even the moral tone of individual lives and of the community.

"Bertha M—— is the mother of three children, Ellen, five; Mary, three; and Harold, nine months. The mother was deserted before the youngest child was born. The family rooms with a young married couple on Thirty-first Street east of State Street. The mother does 'day work,' earning \$3.50 a day. Work is irregular. When the mother is out, Ethel, the young married friend, 'looks after the children.' Cooking privileges are allowed. The home is situated on the third floor of a brick building; the ground floor is used for a store, the two upper floors are used for residence purposes. Physical deterioration characterizes the building and the community as well. For the one room occupied, plus the privileges of the home, the mother pays \$5 a week. In addition, food and clothing for herself and the children must be provided from her earnings."

Other cases could be cited. Case documents, given in their own words, telling the plight of such families and their valiant efforts to maintain bare sustenance, present the seriousness of such problems.<sup>19</sup> However, in passing, it may be noted that the case quoted

<sup>18</sup> Data supplied by Mrs. Martha Wilson-Edwards, Placement Secretary of the Chicago Urban League. When work upon this report was started it was anticipated that extensive data from the general Negro and white population groups would be secured. Lack of funds and time prevented the gathering of such data. However, the data presented may be safely regarded as typical for the Negro group in the occupational classifications given. Due to the comprehensive contacts of the organization and the recognized quality of its work, the data are unquestionably authentic.

<sup>19</sup> It was earlier anticipated that some such documents would be included in this paper. The reason for the omission is explained in footnote 18. In many cases involving appeals for aid, individuals are adept at presenting the case in the most serious possible manner. However, experience and investigation will reveal, usually, the truth of such claims.

above is not unusual. Hundreds of cases applying to the Chicago Urban League during the winter (1931) reveal the plight of these lower level income persons. Although the winter was unusual in the number of appeals, the seriousness of such cases is the rule even in normal times.

**Household Employees.** General houseworkers number the largest occupational classification placements (352) made in this study. The average wage paid for such work is \$10 a week. The range of wages, however, is from \$5 to \$20 a week. The higher limits of the range represent unusual wages. Such wages are usually paid only by wealthy families who live in suburban North Shore homes. These wages are inducements to secure reliable and steady help, solving the difficulty of what would otherwise involve a large turnover of household help. Nurse maids and second maids usually receive \$12 a week. Here again if higher wages are paid it is an effort of suburban families to secure dependable service. On the other hand, wages within the city often fall below the average, dropping in some cases as low as \$8 or \$10 a week. Some families take advantage of a stringent economic situation by cutting wages. This practice, however, has not been extensively used by established households having those with lengthy employment history in their service.<sup>20</sup> Such families maintain their wage scale. This is especially true of suburban families who do not wish to jeopardize the services of steady and reliable help.

Cooks, on an average, receive a higher average wage than any other type of household employee. Fifteen dollars a week is the average wage paid them. In some instances the range of wages extends as high as \$25 a week. Day workers (the second largest number of placements) usually receive \$3.50 a day. Many of the women engaged in this line of work have enough different homes in which to work to keep at work daily. Some use such work only two or three days a week as a means of augmenting the family income. On the other hand, there is loss of considerable energy by those who desire steady work but are unable to secure it.

From merely an economic standpoint the services of married

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<sup>20</sup> Mrs. Martha Wilson-Edwards, Placement Secretary, Chicago Urban League, reports that most of the workers placed by her in established households have rendered satisfactory service and consequently have not suffered loss of time from work nor wage reductions.

couples in private families offer a chance for the prolific accumulation of savings. The fact that the wages received are practically clear from all except voluntary expenditures makes this possible. On the other hand, this advantage is counteracted by the lack of a congenial home atmosphere devoid of association with one's work. Another disadvantage is in the long hours of service required. Most couples, however, are comfortably housed and often receive unusual privileges as inducements to stay. Hence the personal tastes of the couple are often fulfilled in such service to the complete satisfaction of their physical and mental desires.

Couples thus employed are not faced directly with the problem of the physical aspects of housing—the requirement of rent, and the physical and moral tone of the community. Nevertheless, there is a backwash on the Negro community that probably affects the community more than the individuals involved. On their "day off" or for week-ends couples employed in private families usually seek the society of their friends in the Negro community. They thus become more or less periodic roomers. Some couples even maintain a room for just such occasions. An arrangement on this basis may be economically beneficial to the head of the home, but usually it involves some degree of crowding.

The wages paid to couples employed in private families range from \$125 to \$150 a month. The amount covers wages for the services of both man and wife.

**Laundry Workers and Hotel Maids.** Placements of Negro females in laundry work revolve usually about two types of operations: (1) hand ironers; and (2) mangle operators. Hand ironers are employed in the small neighborhood hand laundries and for special service, such as the ironing of shirts, in the large laundries. Such operations are often on a piecework basis. Mangle operators are almost exclusively employed in mass production work in the large steam laundries. Those employed as hand ironers average \$15 a week income. This, however, involves speedy and intensive work. The average income of the mangle operator is \$12 a week. She receives less than the hand ironer because the operation involves primarily flat work done with machine operation. Wages for either type of service do not vary much from the income levels cited.

Hotel maids receive about the same wages as laundry workers. Variations in wages are usually reflected in the standards of the hotel. That is, the higher class hotels pay slightly more and in turn require a higher degree of personal neatness and efficiency. The average wage scale for hotel maids ranges from \$12 to \$15 a week, depending upon hotel standards.

**Factory Workers.** Wages paid to Negro females engaged in various types of factory work range from \$8 to \$15 a week. The wage paid depends upon the nature of the operation performed. Individual cases of highly specialized work receive as high as \$25 a week. These cases, however, are comparatively rare.

Power-machine operators usually work on a piecework rate. This means intensive speed to maintain production. The prevailing incomes from this type of work range from \$8 to \$10 a week. It is for the same operation, the same quality of work and the same output that an observer of wide experience noted that Negro females receive less than white females.

The term "hand sewers" refers here to those employed in some type of factory work involving a nonmachine operation. The average wage paid for this type of work is \$15 a week.

Those engaged in some form of automobile-parts manufacturing receive an average wage of \$13 a week. The packing industries, while often not offering as dignified work, pay more. However, even here the average is sometimes lower. The range of wages in the packing industry runs from \$12 to \$15 a week.

**Trained Workers.** The classification of occupational types and operations could be continued. It is enough, however, to indicate the prevailing wages received. The wages of Negro females rarely cover a wide range in such a variety of occupational groups as tie, lamp-shade and pillow makers; or salesladies and stock-girls; or soda dispensers and counter-girls. Nevertheless, there is one group to which this does not apply. The income of stenographers and office workers usually ranges from \$15 to \$25 a week. The average is \$20 a week.

The character of the work and the training involved, inevitably call for higher compensation than the work of unskilled and semi-skilled work. Even so, the average income for the Negro female stenographer or clerical help is less than that generally paid white

workers. Loop<sup>21</sup> workers in these lines usually receive \$20 a week and upwards. Many receive \$25 to \$35 a week.<sup>22</sup> The earnings of Negro female workers, however, approximate the average income of white workers employed in small outlying business establishments. In addition, the same rate of pay is received for the same type of work by those employed in civic or philanthropic work.

In general, Negro female workers receive less income than white female workers for the same type and quality of work. This is significantly true for occupational work as nurses or second maids, power-machine operators, salesladies, clerical and stenographic work. Placements made by the Chicago Urban League (1930) of Negro female workers is presented in Table V, showing average wage, wage range, and the average and range among white female workers.

### Negro Male Workers

The Negro male worker, as in the case of the Negro female worker, usually receives less pay for the same type and quality of work than do white workers. It is true that there are notable exceptions to this statement. The exceptions, however, are primarily to be found in the higher levels of income involving higher occupational levels.

Not only does the Negro male face a difference in wage but he faces as well problems of lay-offs, of not being hired until white workers are absorbed in industry, and kindred difficulties. These aspects of Negro labor problems are common knowledge and are reflected in the stories of hundreds of workers. A terse but pointed summary of some situations that Negro workers face is contained in the following :

"The introduction of new labor-saving machinery has been another factor to prove detrimental to the Negro. With increased unemployment among white people there has been a sentiment to appeal to the sentimentality of employers, so that in some places Negroes have been replaced by white workers . . . Organized labor continued to add to the burden of Negro workers, not only in some locals denying admission, but even when ad-

<sup>21</sup> The Loop is the central business district of Chicago.

<sup>22</sup> This statement is based on an inquiry among a limited number of white workers in the Loop.

Table V. Placements Made by the Chicago Urban League  
(1930) of Negro Female Workers \*

Specific Occupational Classification	Number Placed	Negro Females		White Females	
		Average Wage per Week	Range of Weekly Wages	Average Wage per Week	Range of Weekly Wages
General Housework..	352	\$10	\$5 to \$20	\$15	\$15 to \$25
Nurse Maid.....	10	12	†	18	18 to 20
Second Maid.....	15	12	†	18	
Cook.....	12	15	15 to 25	†	†
Day Work.....	150	3.50 (day)	†	†	†
Hand Ironers.....	50	15	†	‡	‡
Mangle Operators.....	16	12	†	‡	‡
Power-machine Operator**.....	12	§	8 to 10	‡	10 to 15
Hand Sewing.....	17	15	†	‡	‡
Hotel Maid.....	30	§	12 to 15	‡	‡
Auto-parts Manufacturing.....	25	13	†	13.45 †	‡
Packing Industry.....	15	§	12 to 15	19.10 †	‡
Saleslady.....	69	15	§	‡	‡
Stock Girl.....	10	12	†	‡	‡
Soda Dispenser.....	11	10	†	‡	‡
Counter Girl (Sandwich). ....	5	12	†	‡	‡
Waitress.....	20	5	5 to 7	‡	‡
Tie Maker.....	10	10	§	‡	‡
Pillow Maker.....	10	10	§	‡	‡
Lamp-shade Maker**.....	25	8	8 to 10	‡	‡
Stenographer-Office Work.....	39	20	15 to 25	§	20 to 35
Date and Nut Factory Work.....	32	§	8 to 10	§	§
Couples in Private Family.....	6	†	125 to 150 mo.	§	§
<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>941</b>				
All Industries¶.....				\$17.53	
All Manufacturing Industries¶.....				15.51	
Miscellaneous Manufacturing¶.....				12.00	
Nonmanufacturing Industries.....				19.82	
Hotels and Restaurants¶.....				14.46	
Laundries¶.....				14.67	

\* Data furnished by Mrs. Martha Wilson-Edwards, Placement Secretary, Chicago Urban League.

† No significant difference from the average.      § Data not available.

¶ Data secured from advance release of Illinois Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, average weekly earnings as of June, 1931.

|| Predominantly Negro workers; i.e., in large wholesale establishments.

\*\* Piecework rate.

mitting them their opportunities were often blocked through underground methods of prejudice and intimidation.”<sup>23</sup>

Appeals to the sentiment of the employer to replace the Negro worker with one that is white have been noted especially within the past two years. In cities and towns in the South it is reported that department store heads have even been threatened with a boycott if Negro workers were not replaced by whites.<sup>24</sup>

Even as members of unions Negro workers are not assured of equal chances of employment nor of equal wages. It is unquestionably true that the attitude and practices of unions vary toward the Negro worker. Some use direct, others subtle means to deny him membership. In some cases where membership is granted, similar measures determine the amount of work Negro members secure. The whole story of unionism in relation to the Negro has been too well canvassed in books and in the Negro press to bear repetition here. However, before passing on, reference will be made to the situation in Chicago. In this connection A. C. Thayer writes:

“Negro workers suffer from discrimination in their wage rates in the City of Chicago from two angles. First, the angle of the unions. In most of the well-paid jobs under union domination Negro wage earners seldom reap the reward of good wages because of the fact that they are few in number in trade unions. There are some unions which refuse to accept Negroes into their group. In all unions where Negroes are accepted, such as the brick-layers, the plasterers and the hod-carriers, they receive equal wages. In the electricians union, however, a separate scale of wages has been in vogue and Negroes are not permitted on big jobs down town but rather do repair work mostly, which very often is confined to the territory in which they live in large numbers. Secondly, discrimination has been found in wages where Negroes and whites do the same work, based largely on color. This is especially true of women.”<sup>25</sup>

**Common Labor.** In periods of industrial activity common labor is a prolific source of employment for Negroes. The wages paid depend upon the extent of activity and consequently upon demand and supply. Even so, under ordinary or even near-normal circumstances the range of wages does not show extreme differ-

<sup>23</sup> Quoted from the annual report of H. N. Robinson, Employment Secretary, Chicago Urban League.

<sup>24</sup> Two such cases were reported to the writer in New Orleans. In one case some concessions were made. In the other case the manager refused to make any concessions. The latter store has a large Negro patronage.

<sup>25</sup> Communication from A. C. Thayer, Director, Department of Industrial Relations, Chicago Urban League.

ences. The average wage paid for common labor is 45 cents an hour, or slightly more than \$3.50 a day. Overtime or the peculiarities of certain jobs may increase this income. An exception to this average income may be found in common labor serving union workers on jobs dominated by unions. The hourly wage rate in such circumstances may range anywhere from 65 cents to a maximum of \$1 an hour. Such cases, however, are not plentiful enough to cause any unusual degree of enthusiasm.

**Packing Plant Workers.** The packing industry in Chicago is another source productive of jobs for Negro workers. Work in the packing plants may in general be classed as common labor, although this classification depends upon one's definition of common labor, semi-skilled and skilled work. Within the plant some work classed as semi-skilled would hardly stand the test of rigid classification. In any event the rate paid does not exhibit significant difference. The average wage paid in the "stock yards" is 42½ cents an hour.<sup>28</sup> In some cases 45 cents is the hourly wage. The work shift is on an eight-hour basis.

**Skilled Factory Workers.** Negroes engaged in skilled work in factories receive an average of 75 cents an hour. Cognizance, however, must be taken of varying conditions in factories. These conditions vary from policies within the organization to competition between factories engaged in the same line of production. The range, then, for skilled work extends from 60 cents to 85 cents an hour. It is significant to note that the average wage paid to white skilled workers in factories is 90 cents an hour—an average that exceeds the highest range paid to Negro workers. On the other hand it is to be noted that there are factories where no differences are made, on a basis of color, in the hourly wage rate.

Molders usually work on a piecework rate basis. The average wage is \$35 a week. The actual earnings of the individual molder depend upon the skill, precision, speed and sustained output that he is able to maintain. Individual cases are known that earn considerably more than the average quoted. These cases are, however, by no means typical of the group.

**Trained Garage Mechanics.** Trained and experienced garage mechanics usually earn \$30 a week. This is considerably lower

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<sup>28</sup> The "stock yards" are Chicago's noted packing industry center.

than the \$45 average earned by the white mechanic, comparably trained and experienced. The disparity in earnings is explained largely by the quality of openings available to Negro mechanics. White mechanics secure work in garages within or bordering on the Loop. The prices charged for work here are higher than in outlying districts. The North Shore business of expensive car maintenance is an added factor. The Negro mechanic, on the other hand, must primarily seek work in garages on the South Side. The difference in volume of work accounts in part for lower wage scales. Some of the South Side garages meet the problem of labor by offering a piecework rate. The low rate, plus lack of volume of business, reflects itself in still lower wage incomes. The garage mechanic employed on this basis usually has a weekly income range of from \$20 to \$25.

**Janitors.** Any discussion of janitors must take into consideration union versus nonunion men and the janitor in charge of large buildings as against those who care for a series of small dwellings. The average weekly wage of \$20 quoted in Table VI refers to the latter group. Union janitors in charge of large buildings often earn \$200 per month and upwards, depending upon the building location, the type of building, and the responsibility involved. Some Negro janitors fall within this group. But there is a large area where the individual must depend on securing the care of a series of one, two or more apartment dwellings. Ordinarily the wage rate is \$10 an apartment per month. The securing of apartments is a potent factor relating to income. In addition, the number of apartments that one may take responsibility for, yet render satisfactory service, creates a definite limitation.

**Restaurant Workers.** The range of wages paid for restaurant work (kitchen help) revolves about the quality of the restaurant, the volume of business, and the wages paid by chain restaurants. The average paid in this line of work is \$12 a week; \$15 is usually the maximum. The range is from \$10 to \$14 a week. This range includes prevailing prices paid by chain restaurants, the moderate class restaurant, and the exclusive class restaurant. Outside of this range comes the extremely cheap class of restaurant found in the homeless man area or the moderate class restaurant of the business and residential areas. The wages paid in the

first of the latter classes are often as low as \$7 or \$8 a week; those in the latter class are somewhat higher.

**Hotel Waiters.** It is especially difficult to estimate the average income of hotel waiters. They rely primarily upon tips as their source of income. This is augmented by a low-range monthly wage. One of Chicago's noted places pays no wage whatsoever. On the other hand one of its large hotels pays \$40 a month. In places where wages are paid, they rarely exceed this amount. An additional aspect of this type of hotel employment, however, should be noted. In some instances whites have replaced Negro help. In other cases white girls have replaced Negro men. Whenever such changes are made the employer attributes it to a desire "to experiment." Except in the cases of girls, no change in the wage rate is made; at least, if so, it is not made public.

**Housemen.** The duties of a houseman are by no means certain. They vary from household to household. Sometimes the houseman acts as butler, yardman and handyman; in other cases he is a combination butler and chauffeur. Still other combinations exist. In any event the average wage is the same. The ability of the individual to ingratiate himself into the esteem of his employer may aid him in earning above the average. This average, for Negroes, is \$20 a week. The white houseman averages \$25 a week.

**Chauffeurs.** The weekly wage of the chauffeur depends upon whether or not he is merely expected to drive or to keep up repairs on the car as well. Increasingly the latter is expected. The average wage paid to the Negro chauffeur for this type of service is \$35 a week, which is in contrast to the \$45 average paid to the white chauffeur.

The foregoing discussion of average incomes among Negro workers is not intended as being exhaustive. The desire has been, primarily, to present the average wage and wage range involved among certain classes of work in Chicago where large numbers of Negro workers are employed. Table VI presents these data with some additional occupational classifications included. It is especially to be noted that the classifications "unskilled," "semi-skilled," and "skilled" worker have been intentionally omitted. Occupational definition, based on such classification, is not identical in all in-

**Table VI. Average Weekly Wages and Range of Wages for Specific Occupational Classifications, Negro Male Workers in Chicago.**

Specific Occupational Classification	Negro Males		White Males	
	Average Wage per Week	Range of Wages	Average Wage per Week	Range of Wages
Common Labor.....	\$21.60	*		
Packing Industry.....	20.40	†	\$27.67‡	†
Skilled Factory Work§	36.00	\$28.80-\$40.80	43.20	.
Molders¶.....	35.00	27.50- 38.00	†	†
Garage Mechanic.....	30.00	20.00- 25.00	45.00	\$40.00-\$50.00
Garage (mechanic) Assistant.....	18.00	*	†	†
Car Washer.....	16.00	†	†	†
Janitors**.....	20.00	†	†	†
Porters.....	18.00	10.00- 25.00	†	†
Laundry Work.....	21.00	†	31.39†-††	†
Restaurant Work: Kitchen Help.....	12.00	10.00- 14.00	14.00	†
Soda Dispenser.....	15.00	*	†	†
Theater Usher.....	16.00	*	†	†
Delivery Truck Work.....	16.00	12.00- 20.00	†	†
Houseman.....	20.00	*	25.00	*
Chauffeur.....	35.00	*	45.00	*
Watchman.....	20.00	18.00- 25.00	†	†
All Industries‡.....			\$28.41	
All Manufacturing Industries‡.....			26.52	
Miscellaneous Manufacturing‡.....			25.17	
Nonmanufacturing Industries‡.....			32.85	

\* No significant difference from the average.

† Data not available.

‡ Data secured from advance release of Illinois Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, average weekly earnings as of June, 1931.

§ No difference in wages (whites and Negroes) in some factories.

¶ Piecework.

|| When engaged on piecework.

\*\* Refers to janitors who take care of small apartment buildings and dwellings.

†† Data not exactly comparable.

dustries, nor in different plants within the same industry. It was, therefore, felt that a clearer picture of income levels might be presented by taking specific occupational classifications. In addition, such classifications permitted consideration of smaller units and for variations within units.

By way of summary it may be noted that the vast majority of Negro male workers in Chicago receive a weekly wage ranging from \$20 to \$22.50. During periods of unusual industrial activity this range is somewhat higher. Negro female workers average approximately \$10 a week. These averages, however, are presented advisedly. One must bear in mind wide differences in different occupational levels.

### Parental Income and Delinquency

It is generally assumed that the income level in families where there are delinquents has a direct relationship to the delinquency of the child. Whether or not this assumption is accepted as valid is largely a matter of definition. Certainly there are families where the economic situation is primarily involved in the child's delinquency. On the other hand, there are instances where the income is virtually identical, yet the child is not delinquent. Can these two situations be reconciled with the assumption set forth above? The explanation of the relations of income to delinquency is not found merely in this direct relationship. The occupational level of the parents and the area of the city in which the family lives are two potent factors. Other factors, of course, could be enumerated.

An analysis of the occupational classifications of the parents of delinquents shows most of them in the lower income occupational levels.<sup>27</sup> Indeed, the occupational classifications parallel those quoted in Tables V and VI above. "Common labor" for the men and "domestic service" work for women (except the "housewife") are the two occupational levels, respectively for male and female, that exceed all others.<sup>28</sup> Less than one-half of 1 per cent of the

<sup>27</sup> Based on an analysis of family backgrounds of juvenile delinquents appearing before the Cook County Juvenile Court, Chicago, series of 1929.

<sup>28</sup> Of 403 Negro male delinquents in 1929, the parental occupational classification in the two groups given above was 39.1 per cent and 29.8 per cent, respectively. The percentages in both cases would be greater if the "occupation unknown" classification were omitted from the calculations. Work on almost 600 additional cases shows this sample as typical. A canvass of nearly 2,000 white delinquents reveals a considerable number of fathers as engaged in "common labor." More of the mothers, than among Negroes, are classed as "housewife." This is offset somewhat by a larger percentage of the children being gainfully employed.

fathers of delinquent Negro boys (1929) fall into a professional classification.<sup>29</sup>

It has just been indicated that the parents of Negro delinquents are primarily in occupational levels of low status. Income levels, then, likewise are low. An analysis of the income levels of these parents reveals their average income as being virtually the same as presented for the general group of Negro male and female workers.<sup>30</sup> The virtually parallel occupational work accounts for this. Whether or not these low levels of income entirely account for delinquency is doubtful. It must be borne in mind that the previous life of the parents, the degree of urbanization they have undergone, and their own wishes must be taken into account. In addition, in a high percentage of cases, both the fathers and mothers of the delinquents were employed outside the home. Yet, so too, were many of the men and women from the general population.<sup>31</sup>

### Efforts to Increase Openings and Efficiency

The Chicago Urban League has been the pioneer in seeking to obtain new openings in work available to Negroes. Likewise has it pioneered in an effort for increased efficiency among Negro workers. Its efforts, within the past two years, have been augmented by a newspaper campaign in behalf of Negro workers.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Including not only physicians, dentists, etc., but also workers in clerical, civic or governmental positions, and the like.

<sup>30</sup> The median wage for the fathers of Negro delinquents was \$28; the median for the mothers was \$13.57. Quotations are based on the 1929 Negro cases before the Cook County Juvenile Court. While the income levels presented are higher than present (1931) average incomes for these occupational types, they are comparable to average incomes at these occupational levels in 1929.

<sup>31</sup> In most cases the parents of the delinquents undoubtedly live in areas characterized by physical deterioration, vice, crime, and delinquency because of low-income levels and the seeking of cheap rent. Yet there are known cases where they seek to maintain the simple existence that characterized their life in the South. This situation is likewise reflected in the home life of some of the men employed in the stock yards, whose wives also work outside the home. Care must, therefore, be exercised in drawing conclusions about delinquency merely on a basis of low-income levels and the fact that both parents work outside the home. We do not know, for example, how many such cases there are where delinquency does not exist; nor do we know in how many such families there are or are not children.

<sup>32</sup> The campaign sponsored by the *Chicago Whip*. This campaign is characterized by the slogan *Don't Spend Your Money Where You Cannot Work*. The effort has centered on forcing employment of Negroes in retail establishments located in the Negro area and primarily patronized by Negroes.

In addition to the free employment service offered by the Urban League a considerable portion of the Industrial Department's effort is centered in attempts at the placement of Negroes in lines of work and in places that have heretofore not been open to them. The results along this line were negligible during the past year. This is attributed to the economic depression. However, through its efforts, in 1929 twenty-eight such openings<sup>33</sup> were made available to Negro workers. To these may be added the openings made available, directly or indirectly, through the *Chicago Whip* campaign.

Other efforts of the Urban League in connection with this program are:

1. Through conferences or talks to impress upon those already employed, their responsibility to their employer, both as a means of their own security and its relationship to other possible openings;
2. Attempts to place Negro workers in apprenticeship capacities, as a means of acquiring skill; and
3. The establishment of training courses for certain lines of work. The class in salesmanship is an example of this effort.

#### IV. Rent Levels Among Negroes in Chicago

In the preceding section an attempt was made to canvass prevailing wage incomes for Negroes in certain occupational classifications. It was indicated that in these occupational classifications men usually earn from \$20 to \$22.50 a week. The average earned by Negro females is \$10 a week, when higher-level occupational classifications are excluded. This section will be devoted to a canvass of the prevailing scale of rents operating among Negroes in Chicago. This will offer an opportunity of canvassing the relation of income to rent, differences in the amount of rent, and differences in the physical condition of the houses rented by Negroes.

The majority of the Negroes engaged in the occupational classifications noted in the preceding section live between Sixteenth Street on the north and Fifty-fifth Street on the south. Wentworth Avenue and the Lake, except south of Thirty-ninth Street,

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<sup>33</sup> Refers to organizations and not number of persons placed.

form the western and eastern boundary limits respectively. South of Thirty-ninth Street, Cottage Grove Avenue forms the eastern boundary line. This selection and segregation of Negroes is particularly true of certain occupational classifications, notably that of stock yards work for the men and domestic service, day work, power-machine operation and stock yards work for the women. The majority of the female workers placed by the Chicago Urban League live between Thirty-first and Forty-eighth Streets, with some overlapping as far south as Fifty-fifth Street. In any of the occupational classifications presented, some Negroes live beyond the southern boundary limits outlined. However, the whole tone of Negro community life farther south is different. It is in the southern end of the "Black Belt" that Frazier found the processes of selection and segregation within the Negro group at the point of highest development.<sup>34</sup> As indicated earlier, our interest does not center in this group who presumably are able to choose the places in which they live with considerably more deliberation than the lower-level income group. Primary consideration, then, will be devoted to those areas in which live the occupational groups heretofore canvassed.

While this section is primarily concerned with the prevailing scale of rent paid by Negroes, consideration of rent alone is not enough. It must be remembered that in many instances the female of the household augments the family income by working outside of the home. In other instances women, for various reasons, are the heads of homes and, with this responsibility, must work. Again, the practice of taking in roomers as an aid to meet the rent paid is characteristic of the Negro area.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Frazier, E. Franklin, *The Negro Family in Chicago*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1932. In his study Mr. Frazier found that it was in the southern section of that vast stretch known as the "Black Belt" that Negro life reached its highest degree of community organization. Here live the majority of the professional group, the percentage of home ownership is higher, delinquency is less rampant, charity cases are fewer, desertion and divorce rates are lower, and the number of persons and families per household less. Other indices as well were used in Frazier's thorough study.

<sup>35</sup> In this connection Charles W. Newcomb, University of Chicago, observes that Negroes fill up the large houses with roomers, whereas the foreign-born element fills up the houses with children. The economic advantages, then, in such cases are in favor of the Negro. The effects on morals and health, however, are probably as serious if not, indeed, worse.

**Scale of Rents for Different Areas<sup>36</sup>**

There are marked differences in the scale of rents paid by Negroes in Chicago. Even within comparatively small areas these differences are decided. Several factors contribute to make this the case. The physical deterioration of a particular house, physical deterioration of the neighborhood, and lack of steam heat operate to make low rent. On the other hand a house in similar condition and in a similar neighborhood may rent at a comparatively high level. The occupancy of such a dwelling on the part of vice interests—bootleggers, prostitutes, policy wheels, etc., may create a condition where high rents are the rule. The immunity from the law that these interests are able to secure in such neighborhoods often makes rents soar where otherwise there would be minimum rent levels.

**Twelfth to Thirty-ninth Streets, West of State Street.** The strip of area west of State Street across the railroad tracks to Wentworth Avenue—a strip four blocks in width—and running from Twelfth Street on the north to Thirty-ninth Street on the south is an area characterized by the extreme of physical deterioration. Families of extremely low economic level, cheap bootleg "joints," and prostitutes, present a medley of life of the lower strata. Practically all houses in this area are stove-heated. In most cases the type of dwelling is what may be described as the half-basement and upper-floor dwelling; i.e., a high basement is used as an apartment, and high steps lead to what ordinarily is the first floor, this too, being an apartment. The buildings are of frame construction and usually have four or five rooms to the house. The average rent paid in this area is \$25 a month. The more dilapidated places rent for \$20 a month and in extreme cases scale somewhat downward. The better quality of house rents from \$30 to \$32.50 a flat per month.

In this area the number per family ranges from two to ten persons. In the upper limits of the area, children are fewer than in

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<sup>36</sup> Data on rents embodied in this section were supplied from the following sources: (1) From the records of the Employment Secretary of the Chicago Urban League, including information gathered from personal investigations in the homes of workers placed by the organization; (2) data pertaining to family backgrounds of juvenile delinquents, series of 1929, secured from Juvenile Court records; and (3) reports of rent investigations from certain district offices of the United Charities of Chicago.

cases farther south. Beginning approximately at Thirty-first Street and going south to Thirty-ninth Street there are usually five persons to a family.

The lower limits of this area, from Thirty-third to Thirty-ninth Streets, have somewhat better houses than do the upper limits. There are a few brick places. The extremes of physical deterioration are not so much in evidence as in some of the frame houses. Even of the latter group, some show recent painting and carpenter replacement work. Somewhat higher rents are paid here than farther north. Rentals here usually average in the upper limits of the scale previously indicated.

**Twelfth to Thirty-ninth Streets, East of State Street.** East of State Street rents paid are somewhat higher than those in the area just discussed. Though deteriorated, houses are somewhat better. Although there are many frame dwellings, brick and stone-front houses are the rule. Business has invaded the area at the upper end. Consequently, physical deterioration is greater than farther south. Although land values are high, incomes from rent are lower than elsewhere in the area. As far south as Twenty-sixth Street there are many stove-heated flats where rents average \$37.50 a month. Even though houses are dilapidated, they are in demand because of accessibility to lines of transportation or proximity to work, and rents are cheaper than farther south.

On State Street between Twenty-sixth and Thirty-third Streets, second-floor apartments over retail stores rent for from \$25 to \$30 a month. Rear apartments in these flats rent somewhat cheaper. In contrast to these rentals, within the same north and south boundary limits but on South Parkway, rentals average \$40 a month. The houses here attest the decaying characteristics of the area but rentals maintain a comparatively high level because of being located on the boulevard.

From Thirty-first to Thirty-ninth Street along State Street, practically all of the places are stove-heated apartments and are located over retail stores. Within this area \$40 per month is the average rent paid. Frame dwellings on parallel and cross streets maintain virtually the same average rent. On Wabash Avenue, occasionally one finds a somewhat lower rent for stove-heated places. Even in such cases, however, rents rarely are under \$37.50 a month. On Wabash Avenue south of Thirty-third Street there

are many brick and stone steam-heated apartments. Depending upon location and the type of place, rents range from \$37.50 to \$45 per month. The three prevailing prices paid for rent are \$37.50, \$40 and \$45, the last being primarily for stone apartment buildings that are steam-heated.

Going over one block east, on Michigan Avenue, and south from Thirty-third to Thirty-ninth Street, rentals are somewhat higher than on Wabash Avenue. Practically all of the places here are stone buildings with steam heat. This area was at one time an aristocratic section of the South Side. Although the houses are large, Negro families are able to pay high rents either because both husband and wife are working outside the home, or because they take in roomers. In some instances both methods are used. The prevailing rents paid here range from \$50 upwards, depending upon the size of the house or apartment. What is true of Michigan Avenue is to a considerable extent characteristic of housing conditions and rents paid on South Parkway between Thirty-third and Thirty-ninth Streets.

On either side of South Parkway conditions change remarkably. On Prairie, Calumet, Giles, Indiana and other streets many of the places are virtually as extreme in physical deterioration as those places west of State Street. Here and there, however, are the homes of those who have bought years ago and who still attempt to maintain the physical attractiveness of their homes. A block here and there shows evidence of an attempt to maintain a high community standard. The average rent paid in this area is \$40 a month. On South Parkway, Vernon and Rhodes Streets live a group who are steadily employed at the stock yards. Of this group, an investigator<sup>37</sup> states,

"Many of the families living in this area receive regular pay as a result of steady work in the stock yards, and as a result are able to pay \$50 per month or more. Even for stove-heated places around Thirty-third Street, off of South Parkway, \$35 a month is paid for rent."

**Thirty-ninth to Forty-seventh Streets.** Rentals west of State Street, as was indicated for areas farther north, show a difference from those east of State. The physical condition of the houses, however, is considerably better than that of houses

<sup>37</sup> Based on home investigations in the area by H. N. Robinson, Employment Secretary, Chicago Urban League.

farther north. Stove-heated houses usually rent for from \$37.50 a month to \$40 a month. Steam-heated places in the area rent for as much as \$55 to \$57.50 a month. In this area, as was indicated for a specific area on South Parkway, live many of the men working in the stock yards. The wives of many of these men work outside the home. Consequently they are able to pay regularly and to pay comparatively high rental prices. Although the physical condition of many of the places in the area could show considerable improvement, an investigator reports a quality of furnishings in the home which is not consonant with outside appearances. Rentals along State Street over retail stores average approximately the same as for places west of State. East of State Street there are several large business concerns located in the area. Except in cases of extreme physical deterioration located close to these establishments, rentals are virtually the same as those quoted earlier.

Moving on east one finds higher rents than those farther west. On Michigan Avenue and South Parkway one again finds stone and brick, steam-heated apartments in excellent state of repair which rent for \$60 a month and upwards. On Prairie Avenue, even as far south as Fifty-eighth Street, there are stone-front flats with rentals ranging from \$65 to \$85 a month, with an average rental of \$70 a month. Here the rooms are large and airy. The houses in this area were at one time occupied by well-to-do white families.

On Calumet Avenue between Forty-third and Forty-ninth Streets is an area that may be termed a red-light district. One walking along the street either day or night may be accosted by women and invited into houses of prostitution. Buffet flats are in considerable evidence. As one usually finds the rentals paid by vice interests scale higher than those for the normal, conventional population, rents in this particular area usually range from \$75 to \$80 a month.

Farther east than the area just canvassed, one finds a considerable variation in rent. On north and south streets one finds stove-heated flats for which the average monthly rent is \$40. On the other hand, on most of the cross streets are large brick or stone flats for which the monthly rentals range from \$55 to \$65. On Fifty-first Street, east of South Parkway and facing the upper limits of Washington Park, are a series of brick apartment build-

ings with high English basements. The average rental in this area is \$70 a month.

**South of Fifty-first Street.** South of Fifty-first Street there is not as much variation in the amount of rent paid as in areas thus far canvassed. This is due primarily to the quality of the apartments. Most of the places south of Fifty-first Street are steam-heated flats and for the most part are in excellent physical condition. Five- and six-room apartments are characteristic of the area. Although rents in some cases range as high as \$70 or more a month, the prices paid for steam-heated apartments usually range from \$55 to \$65 a month. There are, of course, considerable variations within this range as to the price paid for particular flats, depending upon location, number of rooms and other factors. The smaller places in the area—those of four rooms—rent for \$50 and \$55 a month. In some cases rentals for apartments of this size are as low as \$45.

In West Woodlawn, a community farther south (south of Sixty-third Street, South Parkway to Cottage Grove Avenue), there are both single-family dwellings and flats in the area. The rentals here, however, do not show wide variation from those somewhat farther north. The rents paid are virtually the same for places of the same size as in the area just canvassed. In recent months, due to the economic depression, rents here have been scaled somewhat lower. In contrast to the range of \$60 to \$75 heretofore paid, rents have been scaled downward to a level from \$47.50 to \$65. Landlords have made this concession in an attempt to keep their places rented permanently. It must be remembered, however, that this area is characterized by a rather high degree of home ownership. Here, the selection and segregation of the population show a high degree of development. This likewise is true to a lesser extent of the entire area south of Fifty-first Street. Mention was made earlier of this aspect of the area and of Frazier's findings pertaining to it.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>38</sup> For an adequate discussion of the physical aspects of housing in the areas canvassed above see The Chicago Commission on Race Relations, *The Negro in Chicago*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1922, Chapter on "The Negro Housing Problem." Here houses and apartment buildings are classified, ranging from A to D types. It is especially to be noted that no such attempt has been made herein. Interest here centers primarily on prevailing rents paid within certain areas. It has, therefore, merely been noted whether or not the extreme of physical deterioration or lack of it characterizes the area.

### Kitchenette Apartments

Any discussion of rentals would be incomplete if some consideration were not devoted to the kitchenette apartments. The tendency to break up large apartments into kitchenette apartments has been especially marked in the Negro area within the past two years. In some blocks this tendency is especially pronounced. Indeed, there are blocks where, almost without exception, every flat has been transformed into kitchenette apartments. Poor sanitation arising out of the kitchenette apartment is an evil in housing that the Negro population must face. Usually kitchenette apartments in the Negro area are not designed primarily for that use. For the most part they are merely makeshift, small apartments designed to increase the income of the landlord on the one hand and to provide what presumably are cheaper rents for Negroes on the other hand. The average price paid for such places, however, is really considerably more exorbitant than is usually assumed. This is especially true when one considers the comparative lack of privacy to be found in kitchenette apartments.

In a recent survey of kitchenette apartments, Miss Tenon <sup>39</sup> found wide variations in the physical standards of kitchenette apartments and in the amount of rent paid by whites and Negroes. A block of kitchenette apartments on South Parkway may be regarded as an excellent sample—if, indeed, not typical—of this type of dwelling for Negroes. Flats have been cut up into small apartments. Bath and toilet facilities are used in common on each floor. Beaver-board partitions are often used to create apartments. In most instances a clothes closet has been transformed into a kitchen, while a former parlor or living-room forms the sleeping and living quarters. In contrast to the physical aspects of kitchenette apartments in the Negro neighborhoods, those on Drexel Boulevard offer an excellent sample of such apartments among whites. While kitchenette apartments occupied by whites are not always so designed for that use prior to construction, nevertheless the physical aspects generally are more wholesome than those available to Negroes. The salient differences may be

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<sup>39</sup> Based on a survey of kitchenette apartment areas among Negroes on South Parkway and among whites on Drexel Boulevard, made during the summer of 1931 for the Group on Physical Aspects of Negro Housing of the Committee on Negro Housing. See Appendix VII, "The Kitchenette Apartment," p. 258.

summed up as follows: The apartments for whites are transformed into kitchenettes so as to allow natural light and air, and privacy; there are toilet facilities and running water in each apartment; and, in contrast to the Negro area, clothes closets are not used as kitchens. These physical differences obviously suggest wide differences in the design, arrangements, and conditions generally conducive to health—or lack of it—in kitchenette apartments.

In exchange for a place to sleep, inadequate cooking facilities and crowded conditions, Negroes in kitchenette apartments pay more than do whites for even better apartments. As to rents Miss Tenon says,

"The highest rent paid on Drexel Boulevard for an apartment was \$12.50, while the highest amount paid on South Parkway was \$15 a week. These apartments were comparable in accommodations. However, those on Drexel Boulevard, for this maximum amount, also offered maid and janitor service. The average rental per week per apartment on Drexel Boulevard was \$7.15 while the average rental on South Parkway was \$8.75 a week."<sup>40</sup>

The foregoing materials suggest that when differences in rental prices are coupled with differences in physical standards and other services Negroes pay an exorbitant price for kitchenette apartments.

One can only guess at the menace to health that the kitchenette apartment creates. Sound judgment, however, obviously suggests that two to four hundred people cannot be housed in a small area devoid of adequate sanitary conditions, light and air, without serious jeopardy to health. Of the effects on morals one can speak with somewhat more assurance. Common use of bath and toilet facilities by men, women and children unquestionably lowers the moral tone of those thus exposed. It is significant to note that a woman probation officer of the Cook County Juvenile Court reports a marked increase in the number of sex delinquency cases among Negro girls arising out of situations in kitchenette apartments. Following observation of this fact, one hundred cases were canvassed of girls charged with sex delinquency. It was found that in 72 per cent of these cases the delinquent act occurred in a kitchenette apartment. All of the girls did not live in kitchenette apartments. Those who did not live in this type apartment habitually visited them. The average age was fourteen years and

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<sup>40</sup> See Appendix VII, "The Kitchenette Apartment," p. 258.

six months for this group of girls. The remaining 28 per cent (of the 100 cases) were cases in which the sex delinquent act occurred in a situation totally divorced from kitchenette apartments.<sup>41</sup>

### Dependent Families and Rent

The rent paid for dependent Negro families in Chicago rarely ever exceeds \$25 a month. It is the policy of the United Charities in sponsoring payment of rent for dependent families not to exceed this amount. Indeed, in many instances, the actual amount budgeted for rent is considerably below this figure, scaling downward as low as \$6 and \$8 a month. Cases that exceed the \$25 maximum are for families located in the west side districts close to white areas where rentals are somewhat higher.<sup>42</sup>

In cases coming to the attention of the charities, where the families live in houses or apartments renting for above \$25 a month, the family is generally required to move into a place with lower rent. On the other hand, there are numerous instances where the family may or may not appeal to the charities for aid and where the landlord permits them to remain in better dwellings merely to keep the dwellings occupied. Danger of marauders seeking to remove the plumbing and other fixtures of the house when vacant, causes landlords to make this concession. However, landlords sometimes complain that during periods of economic distress some families injure the houses. One landlord cites an instance where a family tore away the mantel piece and used it for firewood. In cases where families do injure the buildings, landlords prefer that they move, foregoing even the rent sponsored by the relief agency.

### Rents and Delinquency

It is generally assumed that delinquency has a direct relationship with low economic status and that along with this, low rents prevail. On the basis of this assumption it would be expected that virtually all of the families in which there are delinquents would be found in the lowest economic level and in the lowest scale of

<sup>41</sup> Information secured from Mrs. Patricia Clark, Juvenile Probation Officer, Cook County Juvenile Court.

<sup>42</sup> Based on data secured from district offices, United Charities, and from a personal interview with Mrs. Lillian Summers, District Superintendent.

rent. In a canvass of Negro families in which there are delinquent children (series of 1929), this assumption was not found to be absolutely valid, although there seemed to be a relationship with those bordering on the lower levels of income and rent.

It has been previously noted that the incomes of families in which there were delinquents were approximately the same as for the lower-level occupational classifications. In the matter of rents paid, a corresponding situation prevails. It should be noted, however, that the mere fact of high rent does not necessarily indicate a high quality of house and a desirable neighborhood. On the contrary, it is sometimes merely a large dwelling in an area characterized by delinquency, the rent of which is met by the addition of roomers to the regular family household. In many instances the amount of rent paid was not indicated in the court records. However, based on other data in the individual case records of this group, it seems safe to assume that the cases in which the data were given form a reliable sample. Of 326 families where the rent was indicated, the median rental was \$29.90 a month. It should be noted, however, that the greatest frequencies in the amount of rent paid were \$20 and \$25 a month. Home ownership among the Negro delinquent group was decidedly low. Home ownership among white families in which there are delinquents is considerably greater. This may be explained, however, largely in terms of the longer length of residence in the county by white families in which there are delinquents. In contrast to the average length of time in the county of approximately six years for the Negro group, white families average fifteen years.

Certainly the largest number of frequencies of even the median rental paid by Negro families in this group is not high enough to afford residence in desirable homes or in desirable residential areas. The rental averages are comparable to rents paid for stove-heated places and dwellings in a state of physical deterioration. This is exactly what is true of the delinquent group living in the most deteriorated areas of Chicago. On the other hand, a considerable number live in an area of steam-heated apartments and in houses in better physical condition. Even here, however, the physical deterioration shows a lowering of community standards, and except for counteracting influences it is only a question of time before these places, too, will show considerably more deterioration. The foregoing of course does not apply without some variations to

those cases of delinquency that have crept into the more desirable Negro residential areas.

Some may be inclined to accept low-level incomes and low rents as the total explanation of delinquency. The economic situation is, certainly, a potent factor in the maladjustment involved in such families. However, in the light of recent intensive research in this field it is desirable to consider these factors as they relate to areas of the city characterized by delinquency.<sup>43</sup> It is into areas characterized by physical deterioration and community disorganization that the newcomer tends to settle as a means of securing a foothold. It is in these areas that community behavior patterns conflict with family standards of behavior. Out of the total situation emerges the delinquent individual.

Attention will next be devoted to specific areas of Negro settlement in Chicago. The materials heretofore discussed probably suggest wide differences in these areas. The significance of some of these differences and the dynamic character of these areas are the focal points of the following discussion.

## V. Zones of Negro Settlement

### The "Black Belt"

The majority of Chicago's Negro population lives in an area south of the Loop which is approximately seven miles in length and from a mile to a mile and a half in width. This area of concentrated Negro population is popularly called the "Black Belt." Contrary to popular impressions the "Belt" is not a homogeneous area; it is, in fact, an area of marked contrasts. Within the larger area of the "Belt" there are smaller areas characterized by vice, desertion, delinquency, the homeless man, etc. In contrast there are areas which are characterized by home ownership, high-level occupational groupings, etc.; in short, high degree community organization.

This brief introduction suggests the dynamic character of Negro areas of settlement. This section has for its task the consideration

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<sup>43</sup> This statement refers to (1) the work of Clifford R. Shaw of the Institute for Juvenile Research, Chicago; (2) the distribution and extent of juvenile delinquency used as index in Frazier's study, *op. cit.*; and (3) an intensive research study of juvenile delinquency among Negroes in Chicago by the writer.

of the dynamic character of the "Black Belt," with especial consideration devoted to delinquency, and prevailing incomes and rents among families in which there are delinquent children. The materials of this section will be considered in terms of zones of settlement.<sup>44</sup>

**Twelfth Street Zone.**<sup>45</sup> As early as the beginning of the century Negroes lived in the Twelfth Street zone. More Negroes, however, lived in the area during the first two decades than live there at present. The deterioration in the neighborhood was in evidence prior to the World War migration period. Houses of prostitution and other vice resorts had invaded the area. Later, migrants from the South settled there, pushing the older residents farther out. With these population changes also came changes in the extent of delinquency. In general, Negro delinquency in the area has fluctuated, with a definite tendency toward decrease. The decrease is attributable largely to the invasion of the area by business and the pushing of Negroes farther out, plus an additional reclaiming of the area by whites who have moved into what dwellings remain, seeking cheaper rents.

The decrease in delinquency is shown in that in the Juvenile Court Series of 1900-06, the square mile area rates were 17.3 per cent and 29.1 per cent respectively from the western part of the zone going toward the lake. In 1917-23 the respective square mile area rates were 13.3 per cent and 19.4 per cent.<sup>46</sup> The actual numbers of Negro delinquents in the area show a trend toward decreasing. In the 1900-06 Juvenile Court Series there were sixteen male Negro delinquents; in the 1917-23 Juvenile Court Series there were three male Negro delinquents. In the 1929 Juvenile Court Series there were five male Negro delinquents. Of the lat-

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<sup>44</sup> The zone classification used herein was originated and used by E. Franklin Frazier, *op. cit.*

<sup>45</sup> It was earlier anticipated that a thorough-going and intensive analysis of the small unit areas would be made, especially in the light of inherent characteristics of the area, which in turn reflect community norms of behavior and the degree of community organization. The limited time allowed for the completion of this paper necessitated a change of emphasis and of content, however, so that, instead, an attempt was made merely to indicate some of the salient characteristics of areas, primarily from a lay point of view.

<sup>46</sup> Shaw, Clifford R., et al., *Delinquency Areas*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1929, pp. 96 and 89.

ter group, recidivists outnumbered first offenders. This fact lends added evidence to the decrease in delinquency, inasmuch as new recruits in crime were not in evidence.

Inasmuch as there are no Negro institutions in this zone around which community life may be organized, there is nothing there especially to attract or hold the Negro population. When movement takes place it is usually beyond the limits of the southern boundary. This suggests that those Negroes living there do so because of low income and the chance for cheap rent. Of five Negro delinquents in the area, the fathers of three either had no income or at least no income was recorded for them in the records of the Juvenile Court.<sup>47</sup> One earned only \$20 a week while another earned \$25. Only one mother of these delinquents had an income. She earned \$15 a week. That the income level was low is revealed in the occupational classification of the fathers of these same delinquents. One was listed as having no occupation, two were laborers, and two were in small businesses. As to the occupation of the mothers, one was not listed, two were housewives, while two were working out—one in laundry work, the other in factory work. In the cases of families of female delinquents in this zone, the record of earnings of neither father nor mother was given in the court records. The one case giving the occupation of the father recorded him as a laborer, while two mothers were classified as in domestic service. These occupational ratings rather suggest the low-income level of the parents of delinquents in the area.

The rents paid by these families showed rather wide variation. However, the majority of them paid about the same. The following information is based on the records of families of both male and female Negro delinquents. Two cases did not record the rent paid. One family paid \$9 a month, two families \$20 a month, three families \$25 a month, one family \$50 and one \$80 a month. This level of rents suggests that the houses in which the families lived would not indicate high-income levels, and by inference suggests

<sup>47</sup> Caution must be exercised in drawing conclusions relative to income and rent in the small area on a basis of data presented pertaining to the delinquent group. The comparatively negligible number of cases, especially in certain areas, adds to the need for caution. The data presented are primarily for the purpose of showing how data for the entire delinquent group are distributed in small area units. A clearer picture of income and rent levels among families in which there are delinquents has been presented in preceding sections of this appendix.

the quality of the house. However, one other aspect might be considered here; that is, that the average number of rooms occupied was approximately three per family. The actual distribution was as follows: Two families occupied two rooms; one family occupied three rooms; four families, four rooms; and one family, seven rooms. The average number of persons per household living in these houses was 3.3. The nature of delinquencies of male Negro delinquents in this area falls into three groups: Two, assault with deadly weapon and robbery, two were burglary, and one was stealing money. The female delinquents fall into two categories: One was an habitual truant from home and four were behavior problem cases. In spite of the fact that the area bordered on an area of prostitution, only one of the female delinquents was classed in the social type of sex delinquent. Two were delinquent because of conditions within the home and one through association with a gang. Male delinquents were either of the gang type or the malicious and bully type, with one delinquent as a direct result of conditions within the home.

**Twenty-second Street Zone.** The Twenty-second Street zone embraces the area from Twenty-second Street to Thirty-second Street and from Wentworth Avenue to the lake. While there are differences within the area, there are several marked characteristics of the area when considered as a unit. In so far as Chicago has a decidedly Negro homeless man area, it runs along State Street centering around Thirty-first. Cheap hotels, flop houses, and cheap restaurants afford these unattached men places to sleep and eat at a minimum cost. It is in this area that the Wabash Lodge for the relief of unattached men was established during the past winter. The homeless men may also be found eastward on Thirty-first and around the intersection at Indiana Avenue. One may be accosted at almost any hour of the day or night by drunken men begging the "price of a cup of coffee" or a cigarette. Several habitual beggars are to be seen at Thirty-first and State Streets.

The second characteristic of the area is the potential viciousness centering along Thirty-first Street. Just east of State is a cheap hotel reputed to be the hangout of prostitutes and pimps. It is certainly established that most of the men living in the hotel do not follow a regular occupation; indeed, most of them do no work at all. It was here that several years ago a gang of habitual automobile thieves lived. Farther east are several reputed black and

tan cabarets of questionable character. Female impersonators bearing the names of outstanding movie stars are the source of attraction.

The third characteristic of this zone is the excess of adults over children. Although there are families in which there are children, in proportion to the total population they are relatively few.

During the World War migration period this area was second only to Thirty-fifth Street in the degree of popularity among Negroes. As the population pushed farther southward the area lost prestige and in turn showed decided deterioration. Towards its upper limits business has invaded the area, especially along State Street, Michigan Avenue and South Parkway. Business invasion along South Parkway has tended to reclaim the area from houses that were almost the extreme in physical deterioration to modern commercial establishments.

Rents in this area have been previously discussed. Attention, however, will be given briefly to the distribution of rents paid by families in which there are delinquents. The prevailing rents paid by twenty-four families in which there are Negro male delinquents are under \$30 a month. Nineteen of the twenty-four cases fall within this group, scaling downward as low as \$7 a month. The highest rent paid falls within the \$40 to \$50 interval, being paid by only two families.

Most of the families in which there are delinquents in this area are housed in apartments over stores. Comparatively few of the apartments have less than four rooms. Most of the families live on the second and third floors with a few occupying apartments located higher up or in the basement.

**Thirty-second Street Zone.** The Thirty-second Street zone extends southward as far as Thirty-ninth Street with the same east and west boundaries as indicated in the zone above. The marked characteristics of this area are: First, the decadence of the area as the center of life among the Negro population of Chicago; second, the decadence as the business center of Negro life; third, the prevalence of forms of vice—especially policy wheels, bootlegging, and delinquency; and fourth, the change in the character of the population.

At the height of the initial influx of Negroes into Chicago, Thirty-fifth and State Streets were the center of Negro life. It was said, with a marked degree of truth, that during that period

any Negro standing at the intersection of these two streets would, within the course of a few days, be sure to see any friend who lived in Chicago. Not only did businesses owned by Negroes flourish in this area but Thirty-fifth Street was in addition the center of the night life. Some established businesses still remain in the area. Notable among the latter are an insurance company, a Negro weekly newspaper, and the Overton banking and manufacturing interests. With the expansion of the "Black Belt" southward, the glamour that previously characterized Thirty-fifth Street has become almost negligible. Although there are signs of business activity during daylight hours, one is much impressed with the fact that the street is practically deserted at night, which is in contrast to the heyday of its career.

Although cabarets and dancing schools were prevalent in the area during the period of the heavy influx of Negroes, they were expressions peculiar to the time and were an index to the emancipation of Negroes from social controls in their new environment. In contrast, the vice of today which characterizes the area is more subtle in form, though perhaps more far-reaching in effects. The more prevalent forms of vice are the policy wheels, whose headquarters are in the area, the numbers of policy writers and of bootleg flats. These vices are the expression of loose forms of life in the area. Along with community disorganization there has been a decided increase in delinquency among Negroes.

The rent paid by families in which there are delinquents averages \$30 a month. No exact statement can be made as to income levels because of the number of cases in this zone for which data were not available. However, income levels probably were low inasmuch as, of those cases for which data were recorded, "common laborer" was the prevailing occupational classification.

**Thirty-ninth Street Zone.** It is in the Thirty-ninth Street zone that a larger group of Negro delinquents is found than in any other settlement zone among Negroes. Inasmuch as population data are not available it cannot, however, be stated with absolute accuracy that this is the most delinquent settlement zone. Comparisons on a basis of the same age and sex distribution are necessary for accurate determination. However, the extent of delinquency attests the individual and community processes of disorganization and reorganization. Case history documents of

delinquents reveal the emancipation of the children from former family controls.

The wide range of rents paid by families in which there are delinquents may be explained on the basis of the distribution of such families within the zone. Attention was earlier called to the fact that rents west of State Street were somewhat higher than those east of State, especially on Michigan Avenue and South Parkway. The range in rents, then, varies probably on a basis of the distribution of families in which there are delinquents throughout this zone. The result is that there is a wide range extending from families that pay as little as \$10 a month to those who are paying upwards of \$70 a month. In the low levels of rent the predominant price paid is \$25 a month. In the higher brackets there is a comparatively even distribution ranging from \$30 to \$50 a month.

The occupational classification of the parents of delinquents in this zone reveals that "common labor" for the men and domestic service for the women are by far the two outstanding types of work. It should be noted, however, in passing, that the number of mothers classed as housewives exceeds that of any other zone. Almost 50 per cent of the fathers are classed as "common laborers." Slightly more than 25 per cent of the mothers were in domestic service. Although the total number of cases was high for which earnings were recorded in the court records, it should be noted that families in this zone earned within the higher-limit average of the occupation in which they fall. For the cases recorded, most of the men earn more than \$25 a week while the mothers earn between \$10 and \$15.

The materials presented pertaining to families in which there are Negro male delinquents are true likewise for families in which there are Negro female delinquents. This is particularly true of the occupational classifications of the parents and of their income levels.

**Forty-seventh Street Zone.** The Forty-seventh Street zone presents a strange medley of Negro life comparable to, yet far exceeding, that which characterized the Thirty-fifth Street area during the period of influx of Negroes into Chicago. This medley reveals itself in the marked contrast of conditions along State Street and west of it when compared to conditions around South Parkway. West of State Street, going toward the railroad tracks,

one finds an area of physical deterioration and considerable vice and crime. Here and there are bright spots within the area which reveal efforts to conserve community life.

Around South Parkway and Forty-seventh Street centers to a marked degree the business and professional life of the Negro group. Within this zone community life is reflected in that strong community institutions, notably churches, are located here. These, however, are in contrast to the sporting element found here and there. Community life reflects itself likewise in the rather excellent physical care of houses. There are indications of a degree of selection of the population. Selection within families in which there are delinquents asserts itself in this area as in selection within the normal population. This selection reflects itself especially in the amount of rent paid. The number of such families paying below \$30 rent is comparatively negligible. In contrast, almost 75 per cent of the families for which rents are recorded pay \$35 a month and upwards. The largest single group within the range table consists of fourteen families paying \$70 and upwards a month.

**Fifty-fifth Street Zone.** The selection and segregation of population within this zone reveal a somewhat higher degree of community life. However, it should be noted that although the actual numbers of delinquents and percentage of delinquency within the area are marked, delinquency is, nevertheless, on the increase. Community disorganization reflects itself somewhat in the small gangs of petty marauders that hang around business corners. As was indicated in the Forty-seventh Street zone, the selection within the delinquent group reflects itself in the amount of rent paid by families in which there are delinquents. Most of the families within the area pay \$35 and upwards, with a marked grouping in the \$70 interval and upwards.

**Sixty-seventh Street Zone.** The Sixty-seventh Street zone embraces the community of West Woodlawn. It is in this area that reference has been frequently made in previous materials to the high degree of community organization and selection and segregation within the Negro population. The degree of home ownership alone is an index of community life. On the other hand, recent movements into the area by those farther north re-

flect processes of deterioration. This movement has been attributed largely to the pressure that has been brought to bear on vice forces located within the Thirty-second Street zone. In an effort to escape the raids of police these interests have skipped over intervening zones of settlement and migrated to the West Woodlawn area. However, a counteracting force is in evidence in an effort to conserve community standards. The more alert leadership of the community has a well-functioning community association which is attempting to combat elements making for deterioration within the community. These efforts, to an extent, have been successful.

The number of delinquents within this area is negligible. For the Juvenile Court Series of 1929 there was only one Negro male and no female delinquents. Although there are many children in the area, potent forms of family and social control are in evidence in the negligible number of delinquents. The attitude of the community toward delinquency is reflected in the statement of a woman civic leader. On one occasion she remarked:

"Those children who are delinquents out in this area are all children who were delinquents before they moved into the area, and after they have been here they tend to be no longer delinquent."

While the one case listed in the 1929 Series is not an absolute index to the extent of delinquency in the light of other years, it does reflect, to a marked extent, the degree of community organization and community attitude which are not conducive to the existence of delinquency. Indeed, a check of individual delinquent cases within the area subsequent to the 1929 Series shows the quotation above to be remarkably accurate.

### The Near West Side

Negro invasion of the Near West Side community<sup>48</sup> has not taken place at an even pace. Toward the northern boundary limits, along Lake Street, a pioneer group of Negroes some years

<sup>48</sup> The Near West Side refers to a local community in Chicago whose sociological history has been worked out by the Local Community Research Committee of the University of Chicago. The boundary limits of the community extend from Kinzie Street on the north to Sixteenth Street on the south; from the Pennsylvania railroad tracks on the west to the Chicago River on the east.

ago established themselves. This group tended to show a selection comparable to that at present in existence within the southern boundary limits of the "Black Belt." With the growth of the Negro population these pioneer efforts have been somewhat overcome, with the result that this area now shows a marked degree of deterioration. This deterioration, however, is not exclusively attributed to the influx of migrants but rather to the natural history of a community involved in the growth of the city. The invasion of Negroes within the southern boundary limits, centering in the Maxwell Street area, is decidedly in contrast to the early invasion along Lake Street. In the Maxwell Street area one finds the new migrants from the South who have displaced to a remarkable extent the Jewish population that formerly lived in the area. Within this area one notes on every hand the extremes of physical deterioration, low-income levels, low rents, poverty, vice and crime. In short, it is a community of extremely low-degree organization.

In view of the differences within the larger community, consideration of the Near West Side area will be divided into (1) the Lake Street Area; and (2) the Maxwell Street Area.

**Lake Street Area.** Reference has been made in the preceding paragraph to the pioneer settlement of Negroes along Lake Street. In recent years this Negro settlement has had a decided increase in population. The selection of the population reveals an average type more stable than those in the Maxwell Street district. However, the invasion of business in the area is reflected in physical deterioration, and consequently, community disorganization. Some semblance of community life, however, is in evidence in the church institutions located in the area.

Houses within this area are cheaper than those found on the South Side except, perhaps, those in the northern end of the "Black Belt." Although rents in this area and rents in the northern end of the "Black Belt" are comparable, the degree of physical deterioration is not as marked on the West Side as in the northern end of the "Belt." In spite of the invasion of business and subsequent community deterioration, the Negro population of the area remains a rather stable group. Evidence of this is to be seen in the lack of mobility within the delinquent group, which is in marked contrast to the Maxwell Street area.

Statistical data relating to the number of delinquents in the area show a steady increase in recent years. In earlier years delin-

quency within the area was primarily within the nonwhite group. With the increase of Negroes the latter group has increasingly displaced the nonwhite delinquent group, so that in the Juvenile Court Series of 1929 there was a total of twenty-three Negro male delinquents in the area. This number composed 85.1 per cent of the total male delinquents in the area. It should be noted, however, that in surrounding areas there was a preponderance of white delinquents.

Negro families in which there were delinquents usually paid under \$30 a month rent. Indeed the highest frequency distribution was to be found within the \$20 to \$25 interval. This substantiates the statement made previously relative to the fact that rentals within the area were comparable to those at the northern end of the "Belt," yet afford a better type of residence than is secured for the same rent on the South Side. Most of the Negro men living in the area are engaged in semi-skilled and unskilled work in nearby factories. The majority of the fathers of Negro delinquents are classed as "common laborers." Their earnings average approximately \$30 a week.<sup>49</sup>

**Maxwell Street Area.** It has been within the last decade that Negroes have to a marked extent invaded the southern end of the Near West Side community—the Maxwell Street area. However, before 1920, Negro invasion of the area had started. This early infiltration was rather negligible as to numbers and was for the most part composed of the drift of the population from farther north and of early migrants from the South. In either event, the search was for cheap rents. The rapid increase in the Negro population in the area was due to its proximity to railroad yards where early migrants settled, to the colonization of the migrants, and to the search for cheap rents. It is the opinion of well-informed residents of the area that the majority of the present Negro population found in the area are comparatively newly arrived migrants from the South. One resident of the community described the Negro population in part as follows:

"Most of them have just come up from the South. You can almost always tell them. The first winter that they are here you see them going down the street with heavy underwear showing through their woolen stockings and all bundled up. Then the next year you see them with their silk stockings and low-cut shoes on. . . ."

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<sup>49</sup> Attention is called to footnote 30, p. 171.

Delinquency was decidedly prevalent in the area prior to the invasion of Negroes. The Jewish group composed the largest proportion of delinquents. Before 1920 only one Negro delinquent is recorded as coming from that area. With the change in racial composition, however, the numbers of delinquents coming from the Negro group have steadily risen, so that within a decade the number of Negro delinquents has increased to forty-six Negro male delinquents in the area. The proportion to the total delinquents in the area, however, is not as marked as in the Lake Street area. This is due to the rather cosmopolitan racial composition of the area. The forty-six delinquents in 1929 composed 56.1 per cent of the total male delinquents in the area. On the other hand, there were twenty-three Negro female delinquents in the area in 1929 in contrast to only five white female delinquents. Thus Negro females composed 82.1 per cent of the female delinquents in the area.

The mobility of Negro families in which there are delinquents reflects the degree of mobility of the Negro population in the area. A resident of the area describes the mobility of the general population as follows:

"They don't keep up the property. They would just as soon cut down fences or tear a board off the side of the house for firewood . . . Instead of trying to keep up the property they simply tear up the houses, then move on to some other one. Most of the time they simply move right across the street, or from one street over to the next."

The prevailing low rents paid by Negroes within this area are reflected to a marked extent in the Negro families in which there are delinquents. Virtually all of such families paid under \$30 rent, with an average of approximately \$25. Likewise, earnings are primarily under \$30 a week. The low level of economic income is, however, expected in view of the preponderance of "common laborers" that live within the area. The numbers of fathers of delinquents so classified, rank second for all Negro areas of settlement. In proportion to the total numbers they actually rank first.

It is recognized that these materials regarding zones of Negro settlement do not present a thorough-going analysis of inherent characteristics of such zones in Chicago.<sup>50</sup> It is hoped, never-

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<sup>50</sup> Attention is called to footnote 44, p. 184.

theless, that at least salient differences that exist between settlement zones were indicated. There are, to be sure, other small unit areas that could be canvassed. Our effort, however, has centered on those areas in which delinquency is prevalent and, by way of contrast, several zones that have a negligible amount of delinquency.

## VI. Findings and Tentative Conclusions

In any attempt to generalize about economic and social maladjustment, one must first of all recognize that an individual is the product of his total cultural situation. This is especially true of maladjustment exhibited in the form of delinquency. No one factor, then, may be isolated and indelibly marked as *the causal factor of maladjustment per se*. Instead, it is desirable to study the individual in relation to the total situation. It is true, nevertheless, that one or more factors may have considerably more weight than others.

The increase in juvenile delinquency among Negroes in Chicago shows the same sequential development as that for any racial or nationality group.<sup>51</sup> The rise, ascendancy and subsequent ebb of delinquency has had its counterpart, historically, in immigrant groups that have come into Chicago. The Poles and Italians, in this connection, are examples *par excellence*. Delinquency among Negroes is rapidly reaching the point of ascendancy—indeed, if it is not at that point now. The subsequent ebb, in the course of time, will register itself clearly. The acceleration of a decrease in delinquency depends, (1) largely upon the rapidity with which Negroes are able to effect cultural adjustment in their comparatively new environment; and (2) upon whether or not they are displaced from their status of newcomers by some other group. Wholesale immigration, for example, would accelerate the latter process.<sup>52</sup>

The problem of delinquency is best understood in terms of differences in areas rather than merely in terms of income and rent

<sup>51</sup> This statement is based not only upon the materials embodied in this paper but also upon an intensive study, by the writer, of juvenile delinquency among Negroes in Chicago.

<sup>52</sup> It should be clearly understood that this paper does not advocate wholesale immigration. The statement is merely a prediction of probable results, on a basis of intensive studies, in the event of wholesale immigration involving the displacement of Negroes from their present low-level status. This displacing is characteristic of all newcomer groups.

levels. The processes of selection and segregation tend to link up decidedly these latter aspects with inherent differences in areas. Families in which there are delinquents tend to reside in areas of deterioration as a means of securing a foothold. These families are primarily newcomers. It is in these areas that delinquency is prevalent. Delinquency arises out of neighborhood situations, community norms of behavior, conflict between family and community standards and controls, and the emancipation of the individual from family norms of behavior. Placed in a new situation, parents, in order to "get a start," are forced to a minimum level in areas of deterioration. There is, at first, a status which naturally comes from being a newcomer—a combination of indifference and contempt on the part of those who are higher up the scale. The low status of the newcomer is the outgrowth of low occupational work, low-income levels and residence in areas of deterioration. The increase of delinquency, then, among Negroes is due to their segregation into such areas. In these areas, which are on the fringe of commercial and industrial centers, community norms of behavior vary considerably from conventional standards.

It is not intended to suggest that all Negroes, even among the newly arrived, reside in areas of deterioration. This refers primarily to those of that group who, without economic and intellectual resources, inevitably fall into this situation. On the other hand, it must be noted that the Negro population shows the same processes of selection and segregation that operate within any population.<sup>53</sup> Further, this selection and segregation show communities within Negro areas that are characterized by individual and community disorganization, in contrast to other areas of high-degree organization. These areas, in turn, link up with occupational and income levels within the Negro population. An example of this is evident in the placements made by the Chicago Urban League in 1930 (Table V) in which the lower-level occupational groups came primarily from those areas toward the northern end of the "Black Belt."<sup>54</sup> Frazier, on the other hand, discovered

<sup>53</sup> Based on Frazier's findings, *op. cit.* Corroborated on a basis of distribution, extent, and concentration of delinquency among Negroes in Chicago in the writer's study of juvenile delinquency among Negroes in Chicago.

<sup>54</sup> The occupational distribution among Negroes in Chicago has received a thorough-going and scientific analysis by E. Franklin Frazier, *The American Journal of Sociology*, March, 1930, Vol. 35, No. 5.

higher-level occupational groupings toward the southern end of the "Belt."

The assumption that low-income levels are the primary cause of delinquency does not seem to be absolutely valid. While income levels unquestionably play an important part in social maladjustment, they must, as they relate to delinquency, be linked up with those areas of the city whose norms of behavior are especially conducive to delinquency. Income levels, then, are a causal factor in so far as competition tends to press families into areas of deterioration.

Individual disorganization, which reflects itself in delinquency, is the result of the emancipation from former controls on the part of the migrant. As reorganization takes place delinquency will show a marked decrease. Reorganization may be accelerated through higher-income levels which in turn will afford opportunity for movement to higher-level communities. On the other hand, when industrial conditions reach intensive production levels, necessitating new migrants, the sequence will be repeated—whether or not the same or a different racial group is the newcomer.

It is in the case of the unattached young man, who must rely entirely on his own resources, that low-income levels primarily show a direct relationship between income and crime. The unattached individual's lack of knowledge, training and experience, lack in range of contacts, lack of individual economic resources, etc., are all contributing factors which create a real or potential criminal. This relationship—between income and crime—is not valid to the same degree in the case of the juvenile delinquent.<sup>55</sup> This is due to differences—between the juvenile delinquent and the unattached young-man offender—in age and in individual responsibility for sustenance. However, even in the case of the juvenile delinquent, an indirect relationship exists, to some degree, in that he shares the presence or absence of the physical wants and needs of his parents.

Attention is next turned briefly to income levels and scale of rents.

The income levels in the lower occupational classifications gen-

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<sup>55</sup> Exceptions, of course, may be cited. In such cases family disorganization usually involves some economic responsibility on the part of the individual.

erally show that the Negro worker, both male and female, earns less than the white worker for the same type and quality of work.

Rents vary considerably, not only on a basis of the physical condition of the place, but also depending upon the area of location. Regardless of the area, however, Negroes pay higher rent for places comparable in physical conditions than do white tenants. In order to meet higher rents, Negroes are forced to seek means to augment their incomes. Two methods are rather prevalent. Either roomers are taken into the home or both the husband and wife work outside of the home. If there are children in the family, particularly in certain areas, potential delinquency is thus increased. Unscrupulous families are often able to pay high rent because of illegitimate incomes. The selling of liquor or policy writing are typical means employed by this group. As a result of low occupational classification and correspondingly low income, Negroes are forced to live in deteriorated areas or to use the above legitimate or illegitimate means to meet high rents. The foregoing, of course, does not hold true with those Negroes in occupational classifications and with income levels that allow considerable freedom of choice in the selection of the homes in which they live. The statements refer primarily to Negroes of lower occupational classifications with correspondingly low levels of income.

The foregoing suggests that in the final analysis a multiple approach is necessary in the consideration of housing problems among Negroes. This is especially true as it relates to juvenile delinquency. Economic and social maladjustment is inextricably interwoven with income levels, rent levels, and the physical aspects of housing. These factors, nevertheless, are not constant in their causal relationships.

The foregoing unquestionably savors considerably of a platitudinous summary. However, it loses some of that quality when one recognizes that inherent characteristics and differences in communities suggest a definite and wide selection and segregation within the Negro population. Recognition of this fact is basic and should be the starting point of any remedial program.

### APPENDIX III

## EXTRACTS FROM STUDIES OF NEGRO HOUSING—SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS—SEGREGATION

### General

"Migration to the city is being followed by segregation into districts and neighborhoods within the city. In northern cities years ago Negro residents, for the most part, lived where their purses allowed. With the influx of thousands of immigrants from the South and the West Indies, both native Negro and newcomer have been lumped together into distinct neighborhoods. In southern cities domestic servants usually still live upon the premises of their employers or nearby. But the growing Negro business and professional classes and those engaged in other than domestic and personal service find separate sections in which to dwell. Thus the Negro Ghetto is growing up. New York has its 'San Juan Hill' in the West Sixties, and its Harlem district of over 35,000 within about eighteen city blocks; Philadelphia has its Seventh Ward; Chicago has its State Street; Washington its North West Neighborhood, and Baltimore its Druid Hill Avenue. Louisville has its Chestnut Street and its 'Smoketown'; Atlanta its West End and Auburn Avenue. These are examples taken at random which are typical of cities, large and small, North and South.

"This segregation within the city is caused by strong forces at work both within and without the body of the Negroes themselves. Naturally, Negroes desire to be together. The consciousness of kind in racial, family and friendly ties binds them closer to one another than to their white fellow-citizens. But as Negroes develop in intelligence, in their standard of living and economic power, they desire better houses, better public facilities and other conveniences not usually obtainable in the sections allotted to their less fortunate black brothers. To obtain these advantages they seek other neighborhoods, just as the European immigrants who are crowded into segregated sections of our cities seek better surroundings when they are economically able to secure them.

"But a prejudiced opposition from his prospective white neigh-

bors confronts the Negro, which does not meet the immigrant who has shuffled off the coil of his Continental condition. Intelligence and culture do not often discount color of skin. Professions of democratic justice in the North, and deeds of individual kindness in the South, have not yet secured to Negroes the unmolested residence in blocks with white fellow-citizens. In northern cities where larger liberty in some avenues obtains, the home life, the church life and much of the business and community life of Negroes are carried on separately and apart from the common life of the whole people. In southern communities, with separate street-car laws, separate places of amusement and recreation, separate hospitals and separate cemeteries, there is sharp cleavage between whites and Negroes, living and dead. With separation in neighborhoods, in work, in churches, in homes and in almost every phase of their life, there is growing up in the cities of America a distinct Negro world, isolated from many of the impulses of the common life and little known and understood by the white world about it.

" . . . In the midst of this migration and segregation, the Negro is trying to make a three-fold adjustment, each phase of which requires heroic struggle. First, there is the adjustment that all rural populations have to make in learning to live in town. Adjustment to conditions of housing, employment, amusement, etc., is necessary for all who make the change from country to city. The Negro must make a second adjustment from the status of a chattel to that of free contract, from servitude to citizenship. He has to realize in his own consciousness the self-confidence of a free man. Finally, the Negro must adjust himself to the white population in the cities, and it is no exaggeration of the facts to say that generally today the attitude of this white population is either indifferent or prejudiced or both.

"Now, the outcome of segregation in such a serious situation is first of all to create an attitude of suspicion and hostility between the best elements of the two races. Too much of the Negro's knowledge of the white world comes through demagogues, commercial sharks, yellow journalism and those 'citizens' who compose the mobs, while too much of the white man's knowledge of the Negro people is derived from similar sources, from domestic servants and from superficial observation of the loafers about the streets. The best elements of both races, thus entirely re-

moved from friendly contact, except for the chance meeting of individuals in the market place, know hardly anything of their common life and tend to become more suspicious and hostile toward each other than toward strangers from a far country.

"The white community is thus frequently led to unjust judgments of Negroes and Negro neighborhoods, as seen in the sobriquets of 'Little Africa,' 'Black Bottom,' 'Niggertown,' 'Smoketown,' 'Buzzard's Alley,' 'Chinch-row,' and as indicated by the fact that the individuals and families who live in these neighborhoods are all lumped by popular opinion into one class. Only here and there does a white person come to know that 'there are Negroes and Negroes just as there are white folks and white folks.' The most serious side of this attitude and opinion is, that the Negro is handicapped by them in securing the very things that would help in working out his own salvation." pp. 109-111.<sup>1</sup>

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"There are few cities that are not experiencing now some disturbance on the question of Negro residence areas, and in many of them this question has reached the desperate acuteness of attempts at forcible segregation . . . .

"More than physical limitations constitute the problem. . . . ". . . Frequent . . . attempts to legislate (to control Negro encroachment on white neighborhoods) . . . have occurred in such border cities as Baltimore, Washington, Louisville and St. Louis . . ." p. 302.<sup>2</sup>

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"The segregation movement . . . may be viewed as a process by which individuals in a free society redistributed themselves in accordance with natural ability and personal interest, and how this natural tendency was in part directed and controlled and everywhere limited by the existing racial and caste attitudes . . ." p. 154.<sup>3</sup>

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"Separation by residence of the Negro from the white exists in

<sup>1</sup> Haynes, George E., "Conditions Among Negroes in the Cities," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, September, 1913, Vol. 49, pp. 105-119.

<sup>2</sup> "A Note on Housing Problems," (Editorial) *Opportunity*, October, 1926, Vol. 4, p. 302.

<sup>3</sup> Reuter, E. B., *The American Race Problem*, New York, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1927.

some form in all American cities. In none of them is there complete segregation. No large American city is entirely white or entirely Negro, as is the case with certain smaller communities. There is no Negro quarter in any city in this country with the absolute line of demarcation which separated Jew from Gentile in the ghettos of the Middle Ages in European cities . . . p. 105.

"The residential separation of white and Negro has almost invariably been treated by itself as if it were a unique phenomenon of urban life. In fact, however, as recent studies clearly prove, that is only one case among many of the workings of the process of segregation in the sorting and shifting of the different elements of population in the growth of the city. There are immigrant colonies, the so-called Ghettos, Little Sicilies, Chinatowns as well as Black Belts. There are also economic and cultural areas which often cut across or transcend racial and nationality classifications like the Hobohemias, Bohemias, Suburbias and Gold Coasts of our metropolitan cities. The city, upon analysis, is divided and subdivided into residential areas and neighborhoods, each of which is or tends to be predominantly inhabited by some one racial and immigrant group, or economic and social class . . . p. 105.

"Every community as it grows expands outward from its center. This radial extension from the downtown business district towards the outskirts of the city is due partly to business and industrial pressure and partly to residential pull. Business and light manufacturing, as they develop, push out from the center of the city and encroach upon residence. At the same time, families are always responding to the appeal of more attractive residential districts, further and ever further removed from the center of the city.

"As the result, then, of business and industrial encroachment, on the one hand, and of the corresponding residential motive of escape, on the other, the city tends to take form and to become organized on a pattern approximating that of concentric zones . . . These zones are:

- I. The Central Business District Zone.
- II. The Zone in Transition.
- III. The Zone of Workingmen's Homes.
- IV. The Residential Zone.
- V. The Commuters' Zone . . . pp. 105-106.

" . . . In applying this pattern of urban zones to the problem of residential segregation of racial and immigrant groups, certain

interesting facts at once emerge which suggest clues for further study . . ." p. 108.<sup>4</sup>

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"In order to classify cities according to the pattern of racial separation, it is convenient to consider any area with a population more than 90 per cent Negro as a concentrated Negro area, and any area with a population more than 90 per cent white as a concentrated white area.

"The first group is typified by New York and Chicago, where the concentration of Negroes is great and yet where it affects only a small part of the whole city area; . . . the second group . . . by Richmond, and includes most of the large southern cities where Negroes are highly concentrated in several rather large parts of the city and lightly scattered in others; . . . the third . . . group is typified by Charleston, and is limited to the older southern cities and towns which have a heavy percentage of Negroes in their total population, and consequently a heavy scattering of Negroes throughout the city . . . and group four is composed of cities with light colored infusion, where the diffusion of Negroes affects only a very small area of the city and is somewhat scattered within this area . . ." pp. 37-38.<sup>5</sup>

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"The most fundamental factor in the Negroes' housing troubles has been their segregation in certain sections of the cities. This concentration in particular districts is, of course, not a situation peculiar to the colored population, for many nationality groups tend to congregate in special areas, and every large city has its Jewish section, its Chinatown or its Italian quarter. In the case of the Negroes, however, the situation is more complex and serious because of the emotional tension involved and the race prejudice of the white people, who discourage attempts of the Negroes to expand or change their customary residential area. Nor is segregation a new phenomenon in the North, as for decades practically every northern city has exhibited to some extent a segregation of the colored residential sections from those of the whites. Although complete and exclusive segregation of the Negroes into

<sup>4</sup> Burgess, Ernest W., "Residential Segregation in American Cities," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, November, 1928, Vol. 140, pp. 105-115.

<sup>5</sup> Woofter, T. J. Jr. and Associates, *Negro Problems in Cities*, Garden City, N. Y., Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1928.

a district entirely colored was never prevalent, yet, as a general rule, most of the Negro inhabitants lived in a few sections of each city, the remainder being scattered in varying proportions among the white neighborhoods. Thus virtual segregation had been more or less quietly practiced for years, but with the arrival of hordes of Negroes from the South this whole question of segregation assumed new prominence and importance. In industrial centers which received a noticeable increase in the number of colored inhabitants, the migration tended to increase the amount of segregation and to build up more distinctly Negro communities within the cities . . . pp. 143-144.

"Opposition to the expansion of Negro residence sections did not generally assume the violent form of bombing and incendiarism, but throughout the North there was widespread resentment among white groups whenever Negroes tried to settle in new neighborhoods . . . p. 148.

"On the other hand, there are numerous cases of actual property appreciation. Particularly since the recent migrations, the Negroes have experienced serious difficulty in securing homes and the result has been keen competition for houses which were available. In such cases a Negro buyer or tenant is often willing to pay a higher price than will a white man and a cool-headed white owner can thus sell out at greater profit. According to the Pennsylvania survey, 'Rents and selling prices have always been raised when Negroes moved into the houses that formerly were occupied by whites. The increases have averaged all the way from 25 to 50 per cent.' . . ." p. 150.<sup>6</sup>

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"The factor of racial segregation, both voluntary and involuntary, may, and frequently does, contribute an angle to Negro housing as acute as segregation by income classes may contribute to the housing problem of small-income groups. For even though a city may have a sufficient number of dwellings for its total population, there can still be an acute problem of available homes for Negroes. This factor has been marked by the following:

- (a) The tendency of the Negro population to concentrate in fewer wards of cities, particularly in the North;
- (b) Segregation laws designed to delimit areas of white and Negro residence by legislation;

<sup>6</sup> Kennedy, Louise Venable, *The Negro Peasant Turns Cityward*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1930.

- (c) Restrictive compacts entered upon by white property owners to prevent occupancy of certain areas by Negroes;
- (d) The question of property depreciation;
- (e) The problem of financing home buying by Negroes in areas designated *Negro*.

"Studies of urban zones tend to stress the almost inevitable and unique racial concentration linking them with certain economic implications. The urban studies at the University of Chicago, conducted under the direction of Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess, have gone far towards reducing these observations to a pattern. Cities tend to expand and become organized on a pattern approximately that of concentric zones. . . . pp. 200-201.

"A significant difference appears between northern and southern cities. The location of many Negro homes in the South, near places of employment as domestics, has established tolerance in large degree of Negro neighbors, and it is possible, frequently, for them to purchase and improve the property. Moreover, in many cities of the South, Negroes have preceded white populations in sites desired as new developments and, owning the property, have remained as these sites developed. Border cities, like Baltimore, Maryland; Louisville, Kentucky; St. Louis, Missouri; with an uncertain mixture of traditions of both North and South, have attempted to fix relations artificially through legislation. In successive instances, however, segregation ordinances limiting the residential areas of Negroes and of whites have been declared unconstitutional by the higher courts. In northern cities, prior to the large migrations of Negroes from the South, the Negro population was a negligible factor. Economically hard pressed, it lived in the abandoned sites of early white residents along with or in close succession to other racial groups of similar economic status. With the sudden influx of newcomers and the overrunning of areas generally associated with Negroes, reaction to expansion was acute. In many instances racial factors were given an importance much out of proportion to their actual place in the natural course of the properties in question. The Chicago riot had as one of its aggravating causes this feature of the housing problem. Other cities have had similar, if somewhat wider, experiences, and may therefore be taken as more representative of a large area." p. 203.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Johnson, Charles S., *The Negro in American Civilization*, New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1930.

### The Causes and Results of Segregation<sup>8</sup>

"... Residential segregation is the acute phase of the Negro problem at the present time. Our large cities are being dotted with black wards and white wards, which the politician knows as well as the seaman knows the depths and shallows of the sea. Public discussion of the race problem for the past decade has been all but exclusively concerned with the northern migration and the issues leading up to and flowing from that movement. The rapid shifting of the Negro population from the agricultural regions to the industrial centres was but an incident of the World War, which has been prolonged by the restrictive policy adopted affecting foreign immigration. The immediate motive of the movement must clearly be attributed to industrial attractiveness and economic allurement. It became seriously complicated by agitation for political rights and civic equality. At one time this movement threatened to assume the proportion of a hysterical hegira shifting the gravamen of the race problem from the South to the North. But after meeting the sudden necessity of war expansion, northern industries have resumed their normal rate, making a steady but diminished demand for the reenforcement of black labor. We may therefore calculate that the growth of the Negro contingent in the northern cities will be continuous and controlled by the law of supply and demand in the labor market.

"The Negro leaves the agricultural district and the small town and proceeds to the large cities of the North, where practically the whole northern contingent is to be found. Because of the rapid expansion of numbers, the Negro problem has become more instant and urgent in the North than in the South. The question of housing is the first issue to intrude itself and compel attention. Other features of adjustment might well wait for a more propitious season. But the primal necessity for shelter, like that for food, cannot be postponed or delayed. Somewhere to live is as imperative as something to eat. The unparalleled influx of whites, of itself, would have made the housing issue acute had not a single Negro been involved, but the presence of the Negro gave rise to a double order of complexity. He must needs be provided for, not only with the rest, but separately from the rest. There is little or no observable difference of sentiment on the part of

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<sup>8</sup> By Kelly Miller, Howard University.

the North and the South so far as segregation is concerned, except as it is affected by the relativity of numbers.

"Peoples who feel themselves different, on whatever basis of distinction this difference may rest, will seek separate domiciliary areas. It boots little whether the basis of difference be racial, social or cultural. This is often done without any conscious sense of superior assumption on the one hand or self-debasement on the other. In the Pacific cities the Japanese and the Chinese live in self-sequestered communities by preference rather than by compulsion. There is no conscious sense of self-belittlement on the part of these non-white racial varieties. It often happens that a group conscious of its own idiosyncrasies prefers its own community, to live according to its own manners, habits, and social customs without embarrassing proximity to alien onlookers. The Indian never seeks close residential relationships with the whites, but like Milton's Satan, feels that 'furthest from him is best.' But an inferiority complex which traditional subordination has imposed upon the Negro has well-nigh robbed him of racial self-esteem. His attitude toward the white race is that of the subjunctive mood. Unlike the Indian, the burden of his refrain is 'nearer to thee.' Anything that tends to racial separation in any form he regards as an invidious discrimination which pushes him still further from the plane of equality with his white overlord.

"The white man, on the other hand, deems social assimilability impossible either now or at any future time. The dominant and controlling element in the case is the determined attitude of the white race to forbid residential promiscuity which, in turn, it is felt, would lead to social equality. According to the traditional bias of the American mind, the Negro's color connotes inferiority. His birthmark is more opprobrious than the brand on the forehead of Cain. He must be colonized and penned into himself as a race diseased. Intermarriageability is the acid test of good neighborhood. Wherever two easily distinguishable groups are forbidden to intermarry by law or custom, they will both find themselves uncomfortable in close residential proximity. The determination of the white race on this score is so firm and emphatic that it has been placed beyond the pale of argumentation and debate. The attitude on intermarriage, as well as its preliminary social intimacies, is well-nigh unanimous in the white

mind. This attitude will determine the issue of segregation as long as it holds with tenacity and firmness.

"There is a certain type of temperament among the Negro intelligentsia which dramatizes equality as the goal of all their strivings. To this group discrimination on account of race is the last word of abomination. The slightest suggestion of distinction meets with indignation. No form of racial separation is tolerable. They deride the natural disposition of self-segregation as being derogatory to the doctrine of equality. To them agitation for rights is a more engaging pastime than calm and logical analysis of the factors involved in race advantage and advancement. The question often rises in the mind of the white people why intelligent, self-respecting Negroes seek to intrude themselves upon white communities, since, in their view, exclusive racial neighborhood is but a proper assertion of race preference and privilege and leads to the peace and happiness of all concerned. The right-minded Negro does not oppose segregation as such, but on account of its compulsory character and the resulting hardships. It is an infringement on his citizenship rights under the Fourteenth Amendment to limit by law, or by any other form of compulsion, his human or his property rights on the ground of race or color. The desire of peoples of like taste and disposition to live in their own communities on terms of easy social intimacy cannot be affected by anything which the Negro can say or do. He knows quite well that no amount of agitation on his part can force residential promiscuity with white people where such association is unwelcome. Neither party could gain or bestow happiness by such means. On the other hand he cannot be expected to surrender in principle his constitutional right to the unrestricted use of property, unhampered or unhindered by race or color.

"This seeming inconsistency is the inevitable result of the attempt to make race prejudice conform to logic. The protestation of the right-minded Negro is more than a mere abstract assertion of his rights under the law. He is contending for real, concrete, practical advantages. If the unrestricted tendency to force segregation were allowed to go on without protest the Negro would remain penned up in the most unsightly and unsanitary sections of the cities to which his original ignorance and poverty assigned him. When the Negro began to acquire intelligence and substance, he was confronted with his residential predicament. He found

that he was living in alleys, and dark places, out of harmony with his tastes and ability to acquire a modern home with up-to-date appointments and facilities. There was no other way for him to improve his surroundings and living conditions than by seeking accommodations in white neighborhoods. He quite naturally objects to being penned up in unwholesome surroundings from which there is no escape. Experience also shows that exclusive Negro neighborhoods cannot always rely upon city authorities to furnish facilities for decent living. This is especially true in the South where the Negro race is deprived of the franchise. It is difficult to secure paved streets, light, water and sewerage in Negro sections. The city officials are first concerned in meeting the demands of the voters to whom they owe their positions. It is as true now as when Lincoln first uttered it that 'no man is good enough to govern another man without his consent.' Small wonder, then, that the Negro is suspicious of fixed residential boundaries.

" . . . With the present attitude of the white race and its growing racial consciousness it is inevitable that the influx of Negroes should be confined in segregated communities. As a social movement the process has gone on almost unnoticed by both races. Negro communities have grown up in all parts of the country as if of their own accord. In many instances the Negro has secured the fairest sections of our proudest cities. Reservations which a brief generation ago the elite had chosen for their own abode have fallen into the hands of the black invaders. The writer recalls a reservation in the city of Washington where thirty years ago no colored man was permitted even to pass through without a written statement of his mission. Today a white man is supposed not to tarry in this same reservation except on stated business. About two decades ago an enterprising Negro realtor secured possession of an apartment house in New York City. The adjacent houses soon became vacant. Negro tenants were secured to fill the vacancies. Contiguous properties were abandoned by white tenants as fast as black encroachment impinged upon the erstwhile tenements. After two decades we find in the heart of New York the largest Negro city in the world. Here we see a solid Negro community of some 200,000 souls, in compact residential segregation, with as definite lines of demarcation as if cut by a knife. There was no compelling law. Indeed, the tradition and practice

of New York State are against any form of racial discrimination by law, and yet this process has gone on and still continues as effectively as if by legislative enactment. The same story can be told of all our larger cities to which Negroes are flocking in numbers.

"For the most part this process has gone on noiselessly without exciting public notice or agitation. Occasionally there may be a border skirmish, without serious effect to the participants or check to the movement. The only casualty that has occurred throughout the country was in the Sweet case in Detroit, which attracted nation-wide attention. This case was in no sense different from hundreds of other incidents occurring all over the country, with the exception that it resulted in bloodshed. Dr. Sweet, a successful medical practitioner in the City of Detroit, purchased a house in what had hitherto been an exclusive white block. The usual process of intimidation was resorted to. Windows were broken, threats were made, and a noisy crowd assembled in front of the premises. As a result of Dr. Sweet's defense of his home an innocent bystander, a white man, was killed. Dr. Sweet and his co-defenders were indicted for murder. The case appealed to the sympathy of the Negro race throughout the country. A considerable defense fund was raised by contributions and the most noted criminal lawyer in the country was engaged. The issue was not essentially one of segregation, but the sacredness of the home. The court, true to Anglo-Saxon tradition, decided that a man's home is his castle. The charge of murder was not proved, and Dr. Sweet was acquitted. Yet this tragic incident had not the slightest effect upon the segregation movement in Detroit or elsewhere. The writer visited Detroit a few weeks after the trial and found that there was not the slightest change of mind on the part of either whites or blacks. We may count on more of these incidents in the establishment of residential boundaries between the races. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, on the strength of the Sweet case, has issued a nation-wide appeal for \$1,000,000 to fight the cause of segregation, but this fund, when raised, will be used mainly to defend the legal rights of Negroes to occupy property secured by due process of law, and will have little or no effect upon the real movement toward segregation.

"The attempt is made to blame the Negro purchaser for intruding in what are regarded as white neighborhoods, but whatever blame there may be should be properly apportioned. The white property owner and real estate dealer control the situation. No Negro can buy unless the white owner or dealer is willing to sell.

"When the cityward movement of the Negro received its greatest impetus during the World War, sundry municipalities sought to fix bounds of racial residence by city ordinance. Hitherto the matter had been handled by real estate dealers, who came to a general understanding whereby colored people would be excluded from certain prescribed areas and allowed to occupy others. In many instances the owners in certain blocks, subdivisions or sections would enter into covenants among themselves not to rent or sell to Negroes. Nevertheless, real estate dealers and owners could not be relied upon to abide by their gentlemen's agreement in the face of a tempting offer from a colored client, and the covenant among brokers broke down. Race prejudice, lacking the strength and stubbornness to enforce its own decrees, sought protection of the law.

"The classic attempt in this direction was made by the City of Louisville, Ky., which passed an ordinance forbidding colored persons from occupying houses as residences or places of abode, or publicly assembling in blocks where the majority of houses were occupied by white persons, and in like manner forbidding white persons when the conditions as to occupancy were reversed, the interdiction being based upon color and nothing more. The United States Supreme Court unanimously decided that such ordinances passed by a state or municipality were in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment of the Federal Constitution. This settled the legal aspect of segregation based wholly upon race or color. But social forces laugh at laws. The decision of the Supreme Court had no appreciable effect. Since this judgment, which was rendered immediately before America entered the World War, Harlem has grown by leaps and bounds. The Negro population of our large cities, especially in the North, has more than doubled. Practically all of them have been confined within prescribed limits. The process goes on as effectively without the law as with it. New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Cleveland

furnish the largest and most complete instances of segregation on record; and yet it is without the faintest suggestion of legal sanction.

"After the decision of the Supreme Court various municipalities fell back upon the reliance of covenants or gentlemen's agreements to preserve the racial integrity of specified blocks, sections, and subdivisions. If no covenanter violated his agreement, no Negro could ever invade the forbidden preserves. But here again the thirst for gold asserted its power. These covenants became mere scraps of paper.

". . . In 1926 the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People undertook to test the legality of these covenants by carrying a case arising in Washington, D. C., to the United States Supreme Court. There were at that time as many as seventeen cities in different parts of the country with covenants of like purport, some of them aiming at Italians and Jews. The Supreme Court unanimously sustained the judgment of the lower courts to the effect that these covenants had the legal force of contracts and did not violate the Fourteenth Amendment. This case was an apparent victory for the covenanters and legalized segregation, but in the long run it will be found that, though it may modify the direction, it will not affect the volume of segregation. Covenants entered into by common agreement are cancelled by common consent. The very block that was the subject of the test case in Washington is now occupied by Negroes, in uncontested tenancy, although the court decision forbids persons of Negro blood to buy or live in that block for a period of twenty-one years. Nor is the legal aspect of the victory final. The decision of the Supreme Court suggested a loophole through which the matter might be brought up for further adjudication. The next case which the Negroes will take to the Supreme Court will hinge upon the alienability of property rather than the rights of the race under the Fourteenth Amendment.

"Unfortunately, segregation is begetting ill-will between the races. The ordinary white citizen, who had never thought of the Negro except remotely as a being to be helped, pitied or ignored, when forced out of his home by Negro encroachment develops an antagonistic and bitter spirit. The Negro is developing his own business enterprises to meet the needs of a segregated population. Until now this development has been disappointingly slow, but

whatever business energy the race displays is found in these areas. At one time, the Negro developed certain forms of business which catered exclusively to white patrons, such as barber shops, restaurants, catering and livery stables, but under modern competition such undertakings have become almost wholly a thing of the past. Every Negro community in our large cities has business streets where one sees encouraging indications of Negro business in the future. Strangely enough, in this respect, Harlem, the largest instance of segregation, lags far behind most other cities.

"Whatever political power the Negro exerts is derived from segregation. In several of the large cities, such as New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Cleveland, he elects one or more members of the city council and sometimes a member of the state legislature as a result of his localized vote. A strong professional class has been developed. The Negro preacher administers exclusively to colored parishioners. The physician has almost a monopoly of colored patients. More and more the Negro teachers are being assigned to colored pupils in the public schools. The Negro has established his own dance halls, theatres, and places of amusement. But the greatest marvel is seen in the rapid acquisition of property. In Harlem, where the bulk of population lives in flats and the rent of individual homes is almost prohibitive, this tendency to ownership is not so apparent; but in cities like Baltimore, Washington, and Chicago the Negroes in large part own or are purchasing their own homes in the segregated sections. But nowhere do we discover that the race is developing industrial and economic self-sufficiency. There is little or no surplus capital. There is all but complete reliance upon the whites for employment and means of livelihood.

"The destiny of the Negro population in large cities is clearly foreshadowed. The Negro is to live and move and have his social being in areas apart from the whites. About this it is needless to argue or debate, but merely to observe. The border skirmishes to determine the fixity or fluidity of the boundaries will be largely a question of supply and demand. Real estate dealers will pay more attention to providing housing accommodations for colored people suitable to their tastes and means of maintenance and thus relieve the points of pressure. The few wealthier colored men will not find it necessary to move beyond the racial boundaries in order to secure residences suitable to their financial ability and

taste. A tacit understanding, though perhaps not a formal agreement, will be reached, honorable and satisfactory to both white and black, upon whose mutual good-will and cooperation the welfare of our cities and of our nation depends." pp. 827-831.

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### The Negro Protests Against Ghetto Conditions<sup>9</sup>

"In substance Dr. Kelly Miller postulates as 'beyond the pale' of argument certain beliefs of white men; urges resignation in face of the 'inevitability of social forces,' i.e., lawlessness, 'which laughs at law,' and proposes acceptance of what he erects into the 'destiny' of the Negro in America, which is to live in ghettos, pursuant to tacit understanding, illegal but nevertheless 'honorable and satisfactory to both white and black.'

"To bolster up his position Dr. Miller deals arbitrarily with the entire series of legal victories against segregation. He admits the Louisville segregation case, won in 1917 before the Supreme Court by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, forever outlawed state or municipal enactments establishing segregated residential districts. Then he says this unanimous decision of the Supreme Court 'had no appreciable effect on the fact of segregation.' Is Dr. Miller ignorant of the fact that had the decision gone the other way there is not an American city with large Negro population in which segregation ordinances would not have been pushed and probably enacted?

"The second step, the Sweet case in Detroit, also fought by the N. A. A. C. P. and won by its attorney, Clarence Darrow, went beyond the civil aspects of segregation by law and established the Negro's right to protect himself against segregation by mob. Dr. Miller, on the strength of a 'visit' to Detroit, asserts the Sweet case did not involve segregation and that it 'had not the slightest effect' upon the segregation movement. Judge Ira W. Jayne of the Wayne County Circuit Court, who has the advantage of living in Detroit and of being familiar with the situation, informs me that 'the Sweet trial has been of great educational value in teaching tolerance, the tragedy of mob spirit, and the need for Negro housing.' Race relations, Judge Jayne continues, are now more amicable than they have been since the migration began and the

<sup>9</sup> By Herbert J. Seligmann, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

'police problem is much relieved.' Since the trial there have been no attacks upon Negro residents of districts predominantly white, although before the trial there were a number of such attacks and one reputable colored doctor was driven from his home. The people of Detroit now realize that 85,000 colored people cannot be crowded in the space occupied by 8,000 before the World War. At least three competent observers, one of them M. L. Walker, a prominent colored citizen of Detroit, bear out Judge Jayne's observations. Nor has the lesson been lost on other cities.

"In commenting on the Washington case, the third step in the legal attack upon segregation, Dr. Miller fails to say that the Supreme Court in 1926 declared its lack of jurisdiction and went out of its way to indicate the opportunity for further cases. Three cases are now in preparation to test conclusively the question of segregation by property owners' agreement.

"The Louisville case killed segregation enactments by city or state. The Detroit case was a fatal blow to segregation by mob. A victory in the three cases now in preparation would complete the circle by outlawing property owners' writing their own segregation laws into private agreements. Having minimized the effectiveness of legal victories against segregation, Dr. Miller, to prove the case, draws an inaccurate picture of the status of city-dwelling Negroes. In Harlem, for example, he claims they are set off from whites by a line of demarcation as sharp as if cut by a knife; the tendency to home ownership there is 'not apparent,' and he adds that nowhere 'do we discover' that the race is developing 'industrial and economic self-sufficiency.'

"What are the facts? In border streets of Harlem colored people and white live side by side. They do so elsewhere in New York City. They do so without friction throughout the North and even in the South, except where such friction is fomented. Both races have even tenanted amicably the same apartment houses in Harlem. Dr. Miller's imaginary knife line has no counterpart in reality. Even as theory such separation becomes absurd. In any city housing both races they must somewhere live in contact, unless it proposes to establish a no man's land patrolled by armed sentries.

". . . As for the tendency to home ownership being not apparent in Harlem, perhaps that is because Dr. Miller failed to inform himself. John E. Nail, a member of the real estate firm of Nail and Parker, estimates the colored holding of real estate

in Harlem at more than \$60,000,000 including many apartment houses as well as private dwellings. In one year Negroes are reported to have taken title to \$5,000,000 in New York real estate, most of it in Harlem, making cash payments of \$1,000,000.

"In view of there being every form of service in Harlem from theatres to restaurants and all manner of small shops, Dr. Miller's failure to discover 'any tendency' of the race to develop industrial and economic self-sufficiency seems strange. Of course, if this phrase 'self-sufficiency' be taken literally, the statement becomes absurd. No race or group living in the midst of another group ever developed absolute self-sufficiency. Dr. Miller admits weakness of his own statement when he writes: 'The same might, of course, be said of the great bulk of the white race.' Measured by any ordinary standard of progress, economic, and commercial, as well as cultural, the development of the Negro has been and continues to be extraordinary.

"Dr. Miller's attitude toward race problems accords with his presentation of facts. He indulges in loose statements, for example, that 'the Negro problem has become more instant and urgent in the North than in the South,' a statement any intelligent Negro south of the Mason and Dixon line would ridicule. He states unequivocally that 'the white man deems social assimilability impossible.' If this be true, why the agitation about it and the controversial literature? He accepts as beyond argument a criterion for white men, which many of them would repudiate, namely, that 'intermarriageability is the acid test for good neighborhood,' and uses that statement to bolster his case. In effect, he champions segregation on this ground, ignoring the fact that most people living in large cities make no effort to know their neighbors, or even those living in the same building. He asserts unequivocally of certain Negro groups that for them 'no form of racial separation is tolerable,' when, in fact, it is enforced and not voluntary separation that is in question. No rational Negro quarrels with the tendency, natural or acquired, of individuals to live among their own group, provided the choice is free. Negroes as a group have no more desire to live among whites than whites have to live among Negroes. But individual Negroes who prosper do want decent homes, in decent districts, decently lighted, policed,

paved and served with schools, water and sewer; and all Negroes know that enforcement of segregation, whether or not by tacit agreement, means inferior accommodation at exorbitant rents, just as in the South the Jim Crow cars, theoretically 'equal accommodation,' are in effect for the most part disgraceful denial of decency, cleanliness and comfort for travel.

"A fundamental which Dr. Miller entirely loses from sight is that the Negro as an American citizen has no choice except to fight segregation to the last ditch. To accept it would be to brand himself as inferior and to accept permanent impairment of his status as a citizen." pp. 831-833.<sup>10</sup>

### Zoning

"The increasing acceptance of zoning plans as a means of regulating city growth scientifically has brought up the inevitable question regarding the status of Negro residents in the scheme. Several cities have already attempted to incorporate in the general plan a subsidiary one aimed at the residential segregation of Negroes. We have asked an expert on zoning to define its principles and the relation of this scheme to the question of Negro residents and Negro residence areas where they exist.—*Editor.*" (*Opportunity*.)

"When our Federal Constitution was in the making, George Washington sat as arbiter between two strong men, representing two theories of government. Alexander Hamilton stood for the concentration of power in a central governing body. Thomas Jefferson stood for individual rights. Out of discussions and compromises was born our Constitution, with its first ten amendments which we call our 'Bill of Rights.' After more than a century the opposing theories still are discussed and compromised in popular arguments for individual liberty, in the claims of cities for a greater measure of home rule than the states are willing to grant them, and in the arguments of the states against growing Federal control.

"The two theories are summed up in two clauses. Individual liberty is expressed by 'nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law.' The opposing right, the right of the community to pass laws and ordinances to protect 'health, safety, morals and general welfare' has gradually modified this so-

<sup>10</sup> Miller, Kelly, and Seligmann, Herbert G., "Separate Communities for Negroes—Two Points of View," *Current History*, March, 1927. Vol. 25, pp. 827-833.

called individual liberty, giving protection to all citizens equally.

"So men still argue that every man's house is his castle, and that property rights give entire control of everything within the boundaries of any plot of land down through to China and up to the sky. Most men, however, have been convinced by common sense and experience that many individual preferences must be surrendered for the common good. Four thousand years ago, Confucius, the wise man of Shantung, said: 'The value of thy house dependeth on thy neighbor.' Problems of 'health, safety, morals and general welfare' make the old adage apply with great force to every piece of property in a city where overcrowded streets, land and houses compel the observance of laws which restrict, but at the same time give protection.

"After trying with indifferent success to solve the problems of city congestion of streets, land, and houses through rapid transit, through breathing spaces in parks and playgrounds, through building code restrictions, and health ordinances, and through control of height of buildings, municipalities are now at work on zoning plans, which affect every piece of property in the city. Maps are made a part of the city plan, establishing zones in which

1. The use of buildings,
2. The height to which they may be erected, and
3. The area of the lot which they may cover,

are fixed by law.

"When zoning maps are made a part of the ordinances, no longer may an owner build a public garage, or a wet wash laundry in a residence district. Factories are made good neighbors to each other, but forbidden to invade commercial or residential districts. The districts vary in size, and in location, following natural tendencies of the growth of the city. The result is a city which is as orderly as a well planned house, and where the necessary activities of industry, of commerce, and of family life, each has its appointed place. Property values are stabilized, public utilities are adapted to the specific use for which they are needed, and all property is protected by law in its use and development.

"Zoning regulations apply to future buildings only, but so rapid is growth and rebuilding in our American cities, that a generation will bring almost a complete change, and a city with a properly made zone plan will grow into it.

"One of the charges most commonly made against a zoning plan is that it takes away property rights 'without due process of law.' Probably every community reform brought about under the police power of states which gives them the right of passing laws for the 'health, safety, morals and general welfare' of all its citizens, has met the same charge. As soon as people commence to live in groups, it immediately develops that one owner of land cannot be allowed to please himself, if he injures his neighbor. A water supply from wells, easily contaminated, is early replaced by a pure water supply, municipally controlled. Sewers permit the proper disposal of wastes, and the abolishment of out-door closets. The nuisance of scattered garbage and other debris leads to regular collections. Building codes compel safety of construction.

"Health ordinances include light and ventilation of rooms, water supply and indoor toilets, and take little account of individual rights, when the health officer nails up a colored card telling of infectious disease and establishing a quarantine. Fire limits are arbitrary, but the lines are accepted as a necessity. Frontage consents control certain industries which make objectionable noises, smells, or even which create a moral hazard, as did saloons.

"But local ordinances and state laws which prohibit, have proved insufficient. We must have a new formula for solving our city problems. A zoning plan is a factor in this formula, for it deals directly with all the real property in a city. By establishing varied districts, varied in size, in all parts of a city, for the location of industry, commerce and homes it gives equal opportunity to property owners, and yet safeguards the general welfare of all. It tends to make business property values more stable, and to promote home owning because the investment of savings is protected, and the gamble is taken out.

"The need for a city plan, with a zoning plan included grows naturally out of the increasing need for control of transportation, streets, parks, and playgrounds, public utilities, and all activities of city life. The city plan movement was well under way in 1907, and in 1910, zoning plans came up for discussion. In 1922, about 50 cities had zoning plans in operation, or almost ready for passage, and more than 150 cities and towns were making preliminary studies. The danger is that what seems to be a remedy, may be injudiciously or carelessly applied, through inadequate

study of the real needs, and the best way of applying the regulations.

"Our first zoning ordinance was adopted by New York City on July 25th, 1916, after careful studies had been made for five years. It is called a 'Building Zone Resolution,' and defines its purpose as follows:

"A Resolution regulating and limiting the height and bulk of buildings hereafter erected, and regulating and determining the areas of courts, yards and other open spaces, and regulating and restricting the location of trades and industries and the location of buildings designed for specified uses and establishing the boundaries of districts for said purposes."

"Each phrase of that very compact paragraph has been the title of an explanatory article, of discussions, and of controversy. It introduces new interpretation of the right of the state under its police power, to grant to cities the power to regulate private property in its uses, its development, and its neighbors, whether factories, stores, or homes. Control of private property for the 'health, safety, morals and general welfare' of the whole community, cannot be arbitrary, retroactive, nor confiscatory. But so obvious are the benefits, and up to the present time, so wisely have been the limitations imposed, that the courts have sustained zoning plans, and the power to make this new kind of regulations.

"So rapid has been the growth of the movement, that Mr. Hoover has appointed an Advisory Committee on Zoning, for the Department of Commerce. In a pamphlet called 'A Zoning Primer' this committee answers the question 'What is Zoning?' In part they say:

"Zoning is the application of common sense and fairness to the public regulations governing the use of private real estate . . . Zoning gives everyone who lives or does business in a community a chance for the reasonable enjoyment of his rights . . ."

"Mr. Charles Bostrom, Chairman of the Chicago Zoning Commission, sums up zoning in these words:

"By proper zoning, there will be a place for all, and it will create better order, as well as increase property value and stabilize it."

"While every phase of these varied definitions and explanations furnishes a text for an entire article, we must sum up shortly. The key words are regulation of height, area and use of

buildings; control of buildings hereafter erected; protection of every property owner; and stabilizing of property values.

"It is natural that with so great an increase of the use of the police power of the state in regulating 'health, safety, morals and general welfare,' discussion should arise as to the segregation of the races through the same agency. Several southern cities had already passed ordinances to the effect that in any block where a half, or in one case, the whole of any block was occupied by white families, or by colored families, the whole block should become white or colored. The Louisville ordinance is typical and as it has been carried for decision to the Supreme Court, a brief outline will be of interest, as it sets a precedent. Under this decision of our Supreme Court, it seems probable that no zoning plan which carried a like provision, would be maintained in the courts.

"Mr. Justice Day delivered the opinion of the Supreme Court in the case of *Buchanan v. Warley*, 245 U. S. 60 . . .

" . . . Simply stated the case is this. A white man sold a negro a lot on which to build a home. Under the Louisville ordinance (approved May 11, 1914) he could not build, as eight of the families in the block were white, and two colored. He refused to complete the contract and pay for the lot. Suit was brought and the ordinance held valid in the Kentucky courts. Appeal was taken to the United States Supreme Court.

"The Syllabus of the Supreme Court decision states:

" 'A city ordinance which forbids colored persons to occupy houses in blocks where the greater number of houses are occupied by white persons, in practical effect prevents the sale of such lots in such blocks to colored persons, and is unconstitutional . . .

" 'A city ordinance forbidding colored persons from occupying houses as residences, or places of abode or public assembly, on blocks where the majority of the houses are occupied by white persons for those purposes, and in like manner forbidding white persons when conditions of occupancy are reversed, and which bases the interdiction on *color and nothing more*, passes the legitimate bounds of police power and invades the civil right to acquire, enjoy and use property, which is guaranteed in equal measure to all citizens, white or colored, by the Fourteenth Amendment.

"Such a prohibition cannot be sustained upon the grounds that, through race segregation, it serves to diminish miscegenation and promote the public peace by averting race hostility and conflict, or that it prevents deterioration in the value of property owned and occupied by white people; nor does the fact that upon its face it applies impartially to both races relieve it from the

vice of discrimination or obviate the objection that it deprives of property without due process of law. 165 Kentucky 559, reversed.'

"In stating the opinion of the Supreme Court, Mr. Justice Day said:

"The authority of the state to pass laws in the exercise of the police power, having for their object the promotion of the public health, safety and welfare is very broad as has been affirmed in numerous and recent decisions of this Court . . . But it is equally well established that the police power, broad as it is, cannot justify the passage of a law or ordinance which runs counter to the Constitution . . .

"The Constitution is the supreme law of the land. The Fourteenth Amendment protects life, liberty, and property from invasion by the states without due process of law. Property is more than the mere thing which the person owns. It is elementary that it includes the right to acquire, use, and dispose of it. The Constitution protects these essential attributes of property . . .

"True it is that the dominion over property springing from ownership is not absolute and unqualified. It . . . may be controlled in the exercise of the police power in the interest of public health, convenience, or welfare . . . The concrete question here is, may the occupancy of property be invaded by the states, or by one of its municipalities.'

"Justice Day then discusses at length the amendments after the Civil War, and the reasons for their adoption. He makes the point that while the principal purpose was to protect persons of color, the broad language used was deemed sufficient to protect all persons, white or black, against discriminating legislation by the states. This is now the settled law. He concludes:

"We think this attempt to prevent the alienation of the property in question to a person of color was not a legitimate exercise of the police power of the state, and is in direct violation of the fundamental law enacted in the Fourteenth Amendment . . ."

"The precedent is clear, and similar ordinances passed in Baltimore,\* in Atlanta, and other southern cities, while not carried to the Supreme Court were voided after this decision. It is also clear that any zoning plan, which might go beyond the proper exercise of the police power for the general health, safety, morals and welfare, would be subject to a like decision from the Supreme Court.

"The arguments for and against ordinances which attempt to

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\* See Jackson v. State, 132 Md. (1918) 311; and Cary v. Atlanta, 143 Ga. 192.

segregate white and colored, are indicative of the problems which suggest them. The principal contention is that when the prohibition applies equally to white persons in blocks where colored persons predominate or the opposite, there is no discrimination. But exceptions immediately become desirable. For instance, the Atlanta ordinance provided:

'that nothing in either of the preceding sections shall be construed or defined to prevent domestic servants from residing in the house, or building, wherein they are employed, or upon the same lots with the houses or buildings which they serve.'

"It is argued that such an ordinance does not interfere with ownership, but merely regulates the occupancy of the property.

"It is argued that every police regulation necessarily restrains, limits or destroys certain personal or property rights, or both, but that this does not make the law unequal in the legal sense, as the inequalities arise from matters with which the law has no concern, such as geographical location, economic or educational conditions, etc.

"Railroad, street car, and school regulations were cited in many cases which had been taken into various courts, but the Supreme Court ruled that they did not apply.

"In any city which is considering a zoning ordinance, the matter is of deep interest to Negroes. Whether they own property or not, they are concerned with the uses of the districts in which they live, and of the surrounding districts. The whole movement is new, its technique is in the making, and since a zoning plan when it is enacted affects every piece of property, it also affects every citizen in his home surroundings, and in his working conditions. If our cities are to overcome the evils of congestion, of fluctuations of property values, it is of concern to every citizen to study the zoning plans, and know exactly what they will do. A zoning plan affords security in property owning to the poor man, which the rich man has provided for himself through private restrictions and large expenditures. It puts money into the savings of workers, and is well worth a little time spent in keeping in touch with the authorities who are charged with the preparation of the basic maps. After the ordinance is passed, it is too late."<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Headley, Madge, "Citizen Rights and Community Rights," *Opportunity*, January, 1923, Vol. 1, pp. 12-14.

### Rural Segregation

"Mr. Clarence Poe, editor of the *Progressive Farmer*, has lately been advocating the enactment of a statute by the General Assembly of North Carolina providing that, wherever the greatest part of the land acreage in any given district is owned by one race, a majority of the voters in such a district may say that in the future no land shall be sold to a person of a different race, provided such action is approved or allowed by a reviewing judge or board of county commissioners.

"The statute that Mr. Poe suggests would not impose segregation upon any district but, like the Virginia city segregation statute, would simply enable any given district, so desiring, to promote the segregation of the races. Nor would action by any district under this enabling statute necessarily mean actual segregation. Suppose, for instance, a given district should vote that no additional land should be sold to Negroes. The Negro landowners in that community would be permitted to hold on to their property during their life and leave it to their heirs at death. The colored tenants could, in so far as the law provided, remain indefinitely on the land, and the white landowners might still rent their land to colored tenants. There is no intimation as to the size of the district, whether it would be the size of a local school-tax district or of a township or a county or of a larger area. This, presumably, would be left entirely with the voters . . . p. 107.

"The legal and constitutional issues involved in segregation are not to be considered in this article. . . . If rural segregation, after the plan suggested, is right in principle, then it will be possible to frame a statute that will conform to constitutional limitations. If, on the other hand, it is not right in principle, then the fact that a statute can be drawn to satisfy the constitution would not justify its adoption. In other words, the more important question about a segregation statute is not whether it is constitutional but whether it is just.

"If in the matter of segregation one had only to consider the industrial and social welfare of the white farmers, then one set of issues would arise. But segregation has a moral aspect as well as an industrial and social aspect, and the welfare of the colored people as well as of the white has to be considered, which considerably modifies these issues. If segregation cannot be justified

as being morally right and for the best interests of both races, then it cannot be justified as being sound, in the long run, either in its economic or in its social aspects . . . pp. 108-109.

"If the next General Assembly were to enact an enabling statute and then some community in North Carolina were to take action under it, one of two things would happen as regards the Negroes already on the land. As landowners or as tenants, they would either live on there as heretofore or else they would move into some other community. The latter course is what the advocates of segregation would expect the Negroes to adopt . . . pp. 110-111.

"If the removal of the Negroes from the segregation district would mean the coming of desirable white settlers, then the industrial advantages claimed would, no doubt, follow. But it is very doubtful if even the removal of the Negro altogether from the South would attract an appreciable number of desirable white settlers. The immigration statistics show that the majority of our immigrants now are not such as would be absorbed into the white life of the South. The immigrants actually coming are more illiterate and, in many cases, as superstitious as the Negroes themselves. Would such immigrants, whom we do not need, or better ones, whom we do need, be willing to move into a community that had by legislation said that one element of its population could not buy or own land except under certain conditions? . . . p. 111.

"But suppose segregation did not result in the Negro's withdrawal from the white community. Suppose the Negro landowner determined to live the balance of his days on his land and then hand it down to his children and the Negro tenant gave up any idea he might have had of acquiring land of his own. Such an action on the part of the resident Negroes in the white community would absolutely frustrate the efforts of the white people to obtain the benefits argued for segregation. The social life of the white people would not be more satisfactory. The cooperative efforts would still be handicapped. Every harm that the presence of the Negro in the community now causes would be augmented then because the Negro tenant, with all incentive to accumulate property taken away from him, would become more thriftless and trifling than ever . . . p. 112.

"The effect of segregation by legislation upon the relations be-

tween the races would probably be more portentous than that upon the industrial or moral life of either race. Race prejudice would certainly be aroused by the agitation that would be necessary to get an enabling act passed by our General Assembly. The larger landholders of the state, who deserve some consideration even if not as much as the more numerous class of small farmers, would oppose it on the ground that it would interfere with their labor supply. Other white people would oppose it because they would believe it morally wrong in that it would not be giving the Negro a square deal. The whole country outside of the South would side with the Negro and put the state in the light of having disfranchized the Negro in order to perpetrate discriminations against him.

"A different sort of race feeling would be aroused by rural segregation agitation than by any previous legislation. Heretofore race legislation has been statewide. Witness the suffrage amendment, the separate school and the Jim Crow laws. But in the case of segregation each community would have to take action for itself. The white farmers of a neighborhood would decide that they would not let any more colored farmers buy land in that neighborhood. Thus the white people and Negroes who have been living side by side in amicable relations all their lives would find themselves arrayed in opposing camps. The most bitter feeling in the world is that of one individual against another individual. The next most bitter feeling is that of one family against another as shown by the Kentucky feuds that last for generations. And the next in the order of intensity is a neighborhood hostility. So long as the white people as a race have their feelings aroused against the colored people as a race, this impersonal hostility is not apt to cause any combustion. When the white people and the colored people of any single neighborhood are arrayed on opposite sides in a race issue, then a consuming flame of race feeling is apt to start. The truth of this is shown by every race riot and every instance of mob violence in the history of the country. It has started by some individual or some group of individuals doing something to displease the other race. Because segregation would, in the end, be a neighborhood affair, race feeling would be all the more bitter. If segregation meant that the Negroes were to be taken bodily out of the community and carried to a place where they would never be heard of any more, the race feeling might

be tolerable. But under the suggested plan the Negroes would simply be urged to congregate in a community to themselves lying alongside the white community where the passions of the criminal and vicious element of both races would be fed by the sight of each other . . . pp. 114-115.

"This is probably the most delicate race issue that has arisen since Emancipation because it involves fundamental rights. Voting, for instance, is a privilege; but the right to hold property is inherent in citizenship and should not be tampered with without great caution.

"I am heartily in favor of the next General Assembly's creating a commission to investigate rural race problems. Such a commission would probably have been created by the last legislature if the bodies urging its creation had not already unanimously committed themselves to the policy of segregation. In other words, they announced their conclusion before they had waited for an investigation. An impartial investigation may show that the white people are not leaving their farms because of the presence of the Negro or that segregation is not the best way of reducing race relations to a proper and permanent basis. Let us, therefore, have a complete and accurate diagnosis before we prescribe such a drastic remedy as rural segregation by legislation." pp. 116-117.<sup>12</sup>

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"In the April issue of *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, my friend, Mr. Gilbert T. Stephenson, presents some objections to the plan for land segregation between the races that I have been advocating and which was unanimously endorsed by the last meeting of the North Carolina State Farmers' Union . . . p. 207.

"And yet I must say that nearly a year of discussion and criticism has only convinced me of the essential soundness of the plan I first formally outlined last August, namely:

"That wherever the greater part of the land acreage in any given district that may be laid off is owned by one race a majority of the voters in such a district should have the right to say, if they wish, that in future no land shall be sold to a person of a different race—provided such action is approved or allowed (as being justified by considerations of the peace, protection and

<sup>12</sup> Stephenson, Gilbert T., "The Segregation of the White and Negro Races in Rural Communities of North Carolina," *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, April, 1914, Vol. 13, pp. 107-117.

social life of the community) by a reviewing judge or board of county commissioners.'

"The proposition, in fact, looks rather to white segregation than Negro segregation, providing only that where Negroes cease to become laborers or renters and become independent land owners working for themselves, they should buy land in communities to themselves—or at least apart from those communities which are, and wish to remain, predominantly white.

"Seven reasons I have given for favoring the plan may also be briefly repeated:

1. Because it is necessary to give our white farmers and their families a satisfying social life.
2. Because it will insure them greater safety and protection.
3. Because it will give both races better schools, churches, and all the agencies of a richer community life.
4. Because it will open the way to both races for rural cooperation and cooperative enterprises—work in which it is almost impossible for whites and blacks to work together successfully.
5. Because it will improve moral conditions in the relations of the races.
6. Because it will give the rural South what it most sorely needs—a greater proportion of white people, (1) by stopping the crowding out of the white farmers by Negroes, and (2) by providing all-white communities such as white people from other sections will be willing to move into.
7. Because ambitious young white men will then be willing to go into these all-white communities as tenants, work and save, and become good farmers and good citizens, whereas they are unwilling to go into mixed communities and compete with Negro tenants.

"As to the question why a law is needed, instead of leaving the whole matter to be settled by public opinion, that is also quickly answered. We need a law

1. So as to let each race know definitely its own bounds and therefore better respect the rights of the other race; and
2. To protect white communities from the white landlord who lives away from the community and doesn't care how many Negroes he sells land to—simply because he doesn't have to live among them himself and doesn't care about anybody else's condition . . . p. 208.

"The chief point at which I have been misunderstood and the chief point at which Mr. Stephenson misunderstands me is in my attitude toward the Negro—the motive of this land segregation movement . . . My whole aim in this matter has been to develop a constructive policy to the help of the white man and not a destructive policy to the hurt of the Negro . . . p. 209.

"But—and here comes the rub—I also believe in helping and being just to the working white man of the South whose ancestors through centuries of toil wrought out the civilization which we enjoy—the civilization, moreover, to which the Negro himself owes the very peace, safety, and prosperity he enjoys. And years of earnest study have convinced me that all in all the handicapped man, the disadvantaged man, in the rural South today is not the Negro, but the laboring white man who must compete industrially with a race with lower living standards and whose white social life is impoverished if not imperilled by the universal sandwiching of white and Negro homes. This is the situation that confronts us. The Negroes not only have an advantage over the white farmer in that they are able to buy land and make crops on a scale of living, clothing, and housing that the respectable white farmer and his family cannot meet, but the Negroes have the additional advantage that where Negroes begin to outnumber the whites, or are of bad character, the whites may be forced to surrender the whole community to the Negroes because there is no longer an adequate white social life or else for reasons of safety. This has happened in thousands of cases.

"Let us consider conditions briefly. Booker Washington himself boasts that in every southern state east of the Mississippi, except Florida, the percentage of Negroes on the farms is increasing: The Negroes are gaining on the whites proportionately and rural districts are becoming blacker instead of whiter. Moreover, not only are the rural sections of the South getting blacker instead of whiter but the Negroes are gaining most rapidly in farm ownership, 17 per cent gain in Negro ownership to 12 per cent in white, while—most sinister fact of all—it is the white farmers who are fastest becoming a tenant class (188,000 gain in white tenants or 27 per cent, and only 118,000 gain in Negro tenants or 21 per cent).

"Now if the Negroes were gaining this advantage by virtue of a superior character and civilization, we should have no word of protest. But they are not. They are gaining chiefly because they are nearer the savage stage of man's development—because they will live in shabbier houses, eat meaner food, wear dirtier clothes, than men will do among whom the living standards of a white civilization are maintained—and because new Negro landowners crowd in among white farm families in districts without police

protection and thus frequently force these white farmers to move away. It's an unfair advantage—that is, if we assume that the white man has a right to protect his civilization—and I say that simply as a matter of fairness to the white man and not of unfairness to the Negro, the best thought of the South should be given to working out a remedy. We should give a reasonable proportion of rural white communities, communities owned by our white farmers and their families, the right to segregate themselves, the right to say (under reasonable restrictions) that no more land in such communities should be sold to Negroes—or else some other solution must be found . . . pp. 209-210.

"The only man in the South today whose civilization and whose future are really imperilled—mark my words—is the small white farmer and white workingman." p. 211.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Poe, Clarence, "Rural Land Segregation Between Whites and Negroes: A Reply to Mr. Stephenson," *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, July, 1914, Vol. 13, pp. 207-212.

## APPENDIX IV

### EXTRACTS FROM STUDIES OF NEGRO HOUSING—HOME OWNERSHIP

#### General

"Woofter and the Chicago Race Commission both found that the migration and consequent scarcity of houses and high rents had led to a marked increase in home ownership among Negroes in the North . . ." p. 166.<sup>1</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

City	<i>Colored Homes</i> <i>Per Cent Owned 1920</i>	<i>All Homes</i> <i>Per Cent Owned 1920</i>
Philadelphia .....	12.2	39.5
New York .....	3.2	12.7
Chicago .....	7.4	27.0
Gary .....	9.5	34.8
Indianapolis .....	17.4	34.5
Dayton .....	28.8	41.9
Richmond .....	15.1	25.9
Lynchburg .....	32.3	36.7
Louisville .....	9.6	29.8
Lexington .....	20.7	32.2
Memphis .....	15.0	28.9
Knoxville .....	26.8	40.4
New Orleans .....	8.4	23.1
Charleston .....	10.3	20.2
Winston-Salem .....	17.2	29.8
Worcester .....	22.3	27.5

"Several colored people here were reported as owning not only the home in which they live but also other pieces of property which are rented either to members of their own race or to others. Several of the questionnaires returned made note of the fact that the family was renting from a colored landlord."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Kennedy, Louise Venable, *The Negro Peasant Turns Cityward*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1930.

<sup>2</sup> Reid, Ira DeA., *Summary of Housing Data of the National Urban League*, New York, 1930.

### Chicago, Illinois

"Among these 467 families of unskilled wage earners, 130 families owned or were buying their own homes. . . ." p. 111.<sup>3</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

See quotation from E. Franklin Frazier's *The Negro Family in Chicago* in Chapter IV, p. 86.

\* \* \* \* \*

### Detroit, Michigan

"In the matter of home ownership 657 said 'that they did not own their own homes,' 312 said 'yes' and 21 gave no answers. Of the 312 owning their homes, 81 owned them free; 119 were on contract; and 55 were mortgaged. Fifty-seven did not give the type of ownership."

#### Value of Houses Owned by Negroes

\$20,000 .....	1	\$5,000 .....	27
15,000 .....	6	4,000 .....	22
10,000 .....	23	3,000 .....	41
8,000 .....	38	2,000 .....	26
7,000 .....	21	1,000 .....	23
6,000 .....	24	500 .....	3

The average value of the 255 houses given is \$5,323."<sup>4</sup>

### New York, New York

"The following statement is indicative of the amount of real property that has been acquired in Harlem: 'Fifteen years ago, apparently one-half dozen colored men owned real property in Manhattan, I am informed by John E. Nail, a successful colored real estate man in Harlem. Today, the Negro owned and operated realty, conservatively estimated, would amount to \$60,000,000. However, the community faces a very unique difficulty. The neighborhood is confronted with the question of mortgages maturing. There is practically no opening to the community for re-

<sup>3</sup> Houghteling, Leila, *The Income and Standard of Living of Unskilled Laborers in Chicago*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1927.

<sup>4</sup> *The Negro in Detroit*, Prepared for the Mayor's Interracial Committee, Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research, Inc., 1926, (Mimeographed.) (Section V, Housing.)

placement. Some time ago a local real estate manager informed the community that heads of large lending institutions are desirous of withdrawing their funds. When extensions are granted on mortgages, their terms are of such a nature that they make them burdensome for owners to carry the vital obligations. Years ago it was understood that mortgage accommodations could not be furnished in this section of the city, because in this community the colored tenant was not a reliable purchaser of property. In the past five years, however, he has become an owner and acquired more property. It is estimated that 75 per cent of the real estate in this community is under colored control. The prices paid, however, have not always been fair. The housing shortage affected the price of houses as well as the rental. Old and deteriorated houses shared in the increasing valuation, and found purchasers who will have to struggle for years before they will own their homes free from debt. Where at some stage in the process a building which has formerly been closed to Negroes has been offered to tenants of that race, the change in real estate rental rates receives added explanation.

"Families have found that only by purchasing a home could they be at all assured of a place in which to live at a cost which would not be completely beyond their control or calculation."<sup>5</sup>

### Richmond, Virginia

"Unfortunately, the public records do not show the actual number of Negro-owned homes in Richmond. The Survey figures show that in the Jackson Ward district substantially 18 per cent are buyers or owners and 82 per cent renters. In the Fulton district substantially 60 per cent are renters, and 40 per cent buyers or owners. This may be restated for the two districts in the 1,036 families where the information was gotten, thus: Renters 787, or 76 per cent—buyers or owners 249, or 24 per cent. From the office of the City Commissioner of Revenue it was learned that the value of white-owned property in Lee Ward is \$81,789,710 and of Negro-owned property \$828,980. As Lee Ward is the legal designation for the district popularly referred to in Rich-

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<sup>5</sup> Reid, Ira DeA., *Twenty-four Hundred Negro Families in Harlem*, New York, New York Urban League, 1927.

mond as Jackson Ward, and as a large percentage of the survey families actually lived in Lee Ward it may be seen at a glance that much Negro rental property is white owned. No effort was made to secure this particular information from the families interviewed as it is well known that poor people are often behind in their rent and are afraid to discuss their landlords with strangers. The Knight study in 1927 showed renters 61 per cent and owners 39 per cent." pp. 71-72.<sup>8</sup>

### Pennsylvania

#### Percentage of Home Ownership (Outright or Buying) Among Negroes in Pennsylvania \*

<i>District</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Pennsylvania as a whole.....	36.4
Philadelphia .....	15
Pittsburgh .....	11
Steel Mills District No. 1.....	31
Pittsburgh District exclusive of Pittsburgh	
Philadelphia District .....	47.5
Norristown, etc.	
Steel Mills District No. 2.....	13.2
Steel Mills District No. 4.....	34.5
Coatesville, Reading	
Western Bituminous Coal District.....	38.5
Farrell, New Castle	
Steel Mills District No. 3.....	10
Altoona, Johnstown	
Central South Farm Area.....	13
York, etc.	
Southwest Farm Area .....	37
Connellsville, Uniontown	
Central Bituminous Coal District .....	17.7
Chambersburg	
Anthracite Coal District .....	13.3
Scranton, etc.	
Slate and Cement District .....	7.5
Allentown, Bethlehem	
Northern Tier .....	35.5
Erie, Bradford	

\* Survey by the Pennsylvania Department of Welfare, 1925.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Of the Negro families of Pennsylvania investigated in this survey 36.3 per cent owned or were buying their homes. The

<sup>8</sup> "The Negro in Richmond, Virginia," *Report of the Negro Welfare Survey Committee, Richmond Council of Social Agencies, 1929.*

percentage of home ownership varies, of course, according to the various districts.

"The Bureau of Census states that there were 30,995 Negro families in Philadelphia in 1920. Of this number 26,984 occupied rented homes, and 3,278 owned the homes they occupied."<sup>7</sup>

### Washington, D. C.

"Negroes in Washington have always made prodigious efforts to secure homes of their own, chiefly on account of the limited number of houses available and the insecurity involved in renting. Homes for rent to Negroes are not as plentiful as they are for white people; nor can the renter be certain of always being able to locate in desirable communities. Then, too, the rapid increases in the Negro population in Washington during the past fifteen years have enhanced this 'scramble' for homes. White real estate and construction companies have readily responded to this home purchasing impulse and have erected hundreds of new private homes and apartments for colored people. These real estate companies report the purchase price of the average home that is acquired by Negroes is between \$6,000 and \$7,000. Many of the homes that were purchased several years ago, when real estate values were comparatively low, were secured for prices that ranged from \$1,000 to \$4,000. The average price of Type B homes is between \$15,000 and \$20,000. Five Negro property owners evaluated their homes at \$25,000 and thirteen at \$20,000.

"The average initial cash payment on the \$7,000 home is \$500 with the monthly payments ranging from \$50 to \$65. The \$10,000 home requires a cash payment of from \$1,000 to \$1,500 and monthly payments of from \$65 to \$100.

"No small number of Negroes were found to have purchased their homes at cash payments of from \$7,000 to \$10,000. They were generally persons who had recently arrived from the South, where they have conducted prosperous economic enterprises. . . .  
p. 127.

"The results of this survey indicate that ownership and renting related not only to certain definite areas of the city, but are closely correlated with definite social blocks. And it is possible, therefore, to refer to certain blocks as those of 'home owners' or

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<sup>7</sup> Washington, Forrester B., *Negro Survey of Pennsylvania*, Harrisburg, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1927.

'tenants.' In some of these social blocks, one block is solidly occupied by renters. This geographical distribution of renters and owners is shown on the accompanying spot map.<sup>8</sup>

"For a city of its size, Washington has a rather high percentage of home owners. The facts which were taken from a study of 5,450 homes show that 2,536 or 46.5 per cent, were owned or were being purchased. Whereas, 2,914 or 53.4 per cent were rented. The fact that approximately one-half of the homes occupied by Negroes, in the Northwest and Southwest sections of the city, are owned by their occupants is a high commendation of their thrift.

"The home purchasing movement appears to be concentrating in the newer sections of the city, chiefly those sections into which the Negro population is expanding. There is a relatively small amount of property owned by Negroes in Georgetown and Southwest Washington. In general, the economic status of the Negroes in these sections is much lower than that of the Northwest. In the Northwest section, property values are generally higher than they are in any other part of the city.

"Several of the homes in which Negro tenants are living are owned by Negroes. This fact increases, by a considerable degree, the number of homes having Negro ownership. The larger percentage of the rented homes, however, are the property of white persons." p. 128.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> See Map V, *op. cit.*

<sup>9</sup> Jones, William Henry, *The Housing of Negroes in Washington*, D. C., Washington, Howard University Press, 1929.

## APPENDIX V

### EXTRACTS FROM STUDIES OF NEGRO HOUSING—HOUSING PROJECTS

#### Atlanta, Georgia

"(The late) Heman E. Perry, founder of Standard Life . . . started a homebuilding program in First Ward on the West Side. . . The plot contained originally 211 acres. In it have been built about 511 homes costing from \$3,000 to \$15,000, the average home costing from \$3,000 to \$8,000. About 10 per cent of the homes are brick. About 90 per cent of the streets in the section are paved . . .

"Perry opened the subdivision in 1923. He sold lots for \$350 without street improvements. The lots were 50 x 150 feet. The plot is now about 35 per cent sold. The division is now the property of the National Benefit Life Insurance Company.

"Perry sold the site to the Booker T. Washington High School for a reputed sum of \$32,000. The plot is now contained in 16 acres. The school is one of the most beautiful in the state for Negroes, costing \$360,000, and has an enrollment of 2,500. C. L. Harper heads a faculty of sixty-eight.

"Not only did Negroes move from the southeast section of Atlanta (Auburn Avenue section) to the west division, but prominent Negroes from other cities in Georgia, and from other states moved to Atlanta and built fine brick homes in the division . . ." <sup>1</sup>

#### Baltimore, Maryland

"The housing situation in Baltimore does not present such acute problems as exist in some other large cities because the migration from the South has not been very large and the proportion of dwelling houses in relation to inhabitants has been very high for many years, and still remains so in spite of some reduction in the supply of new homes. This means, as regards the Negroes, that the sections in which they live need to be enlarged, that the homes which are being vacated by whites who are moving to the suburbs shall be made available for Negroes through assistance or pur-

<sup>1</sup> Calvin, Floyd J., "Heman Perry Started Atlanta on its Home Building Program," *Pittsburgh Courier*, October 31, 1931, p. 6, 1st section.

chases, and that their present homes shall be improved in quality and rentals so reduced that congestion may be lessened.

"To meet these needs a Commission from the Interracial Conference formed a corporation with power to buy, sell, lease, manage, and build, adopting a title that would be familiar to residents of Baltimore where building associations have long flourished, The Homemakers' Building and Loan Association. To conform to the law and avoid taxation it is strictly mutual, and stock is sold on the usual instalment plan or is fully paid in \$100 shares. The well-to-do whites who have been willing to invest to help in the start have taken full paid stock and most of the Negroes are paying at the rate of twenty cents a week, although the weekly payments are not compulsory and the stock can be paid for as the holder is able. Dividends have been paid at the rate of 6 per cent from the start, the expenses being very light owing to the clerical work being contributed.

"Half of the directors are white and half are Negroes, the theory of the plan being based upon cooperation of the races, and three of the whites have had unusual real estate experience. Combining as it does the provision of a safe form of accumulation as well as investment of funds and assistance in securing homes, the Association can be of great help to the group in whose interest it was formed, showing them at the same time how to use their money to help their race.

"No building has been done yet, and only the strongest and least needy have been reached; but the foundation is being laid for extension into wider fields, the wisdom of going slowly and becoming familiar with the problems being recognized by the management. One house has been turned into apartments with modern facilities, and then houses have been sold to stockholders, at a total investment of about \$35,000.

"The significant feature of the work of the Association is in the method by which it sells the properties to purchasers, for it does not require them to purchase and then mortgage to the Association as is the usual custom. It buys the property itself and puts the purchaser in the house with a contract of sale which provides for weekly payments on the basis of rent. The following extract from the printed circulars will give the details:

"When a stockholder has enough money in the Association to pay the expense of legal transfer of a property to the Association, six months' ex-

penses, (ground rent, taxes, etc.) four weeks' payment of dues and interest and a fee for the management of the property until paid for, the Association will endeavor to find and buy a home suitable to his needs and allow him to occupy it upon the following terms:

"A contract of sale will be given him in which the Association binds itself to deed the property to him when he has paid for it through regular weekly payments, each of which shall be made up of the following items: One week's proportion of the yearly expenses, such as taxes, ground rent, repairs, etc.; twenty cents dues for each one hundred dollars of the cost of the property, and twelve cents for each one hundred dollars, as interest, this being subject to reductions as each one hundred dollars is paid on the principal. Under this arrangement payment would be made in full in ten years, but the purchaser has the right to pay as much more as he may be able; and the principal payments are increased as the interest decreases, thus lessening the time."<sup>2</sup>

### Chicago, Illinois

"Following the success of those splendid model tenements, the Paul Laurence Dunbar Apartments in New York made possible by the support of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., a new, equally fine group of apartments for the better element of the Negro population is now nearing completion in Chicago, as a result of the public spirit and intelligent interest in the Negro race of Julius Rosenwald, who for years has been one of the leaders in the movement for bettering the condition of the Negro in this country.

"Associating with himself a group of Chicago financiers Mr. Rosenwald, after many years study of the subject, some months ago started the construction of a group of new modern apartment houses occupying an entire city block on the south side of Chicago, housing 417 Negro families.

"The Michigan Boulevard Garden Apartments, as they are called, are located on the block from Michigan to Wabash Avenue extending from 46th to 47th Street on Chicago's South Side . . .

"Heretofore in this country there have been very few new apartments built commercially for Negro tenants; the Negro has had to generally content himself with the cast-off housing accommodations of his white neighbor. This situation is not peculiar to Chicago but is to be found in all American cities. As long as 15 years ago Julius Rosenwald, conscious of these conditions, contemplated a housing demonstration in Chicago, with particular

<sup>2</sup> Cary, John R., "Helping Negro Workers to Purchase Homes," *Opportunity*, January, 1924, Vol. 2, pp. 23-24.

reference to providing decent housing for the Negroes in that city. Land was even actually purchased and plans drawn for an attractive apartment building; but after careful estimates of the cost of the project, it was found that the financial status of the colored people of Chicago was not high enough at that time to enable them to pay the rents that would have been necessary to secure a fair return on the investment.

"With the changed economic condition of the colored people that has come about in recent years it seemed to Mr. Rosenwald that the time was ripe for the kind of housing demonstration that he has had in mind all these years. Consequently, a committee of business men was formed to study the condition of the colored people in Chicago and a survey of the higher-income group among that race was made under the direction of the University of Chicago. This showed a need of apartments for colored people, especially of apartments of three, four and five rooms. As a result of this study Mr. Rosenwald determined to go ahead with his project and after careful consideration of various sites, the present site was selected.

"On this site, which is admirably situated, a garden apartment is now nearing completion. It is five stories in height, covers less than 40 per cent of the 6 acres of land involved and when it is finished will provide accommodations for 417 families with a total of 1,641 rooms. The majority of the apartments are, wisely, of four rooms. The apartments are modern in every respect, in fact may be said to represent the last word in comforts and even luxuries in apartment house living. All apartments are centrally heated from a central oil burning heating system. Every apartment is furnished with an electric refrigerator and with combination tub and shower bath. The apartments are being attractively decorated.

"In the center of the block is a large central garden covering over 3 acres of land in which good sized trees and many shrubs have already been planted. There will be a playground for the smaller children in the garden and a sun-room on the roof where persons especially needing it can take the sun cure. A modern nursery will be conducted in the building directed by competent persons. The building is fireproof and the whole project will cost over 3 million dollars.

"Rents, as was to be expected, are somewhat high. The three-

room apartments which consist of living-room, kitchen, bedroom and bath, range from \$50 to \$54 a month, which is an average of \$17 to \$18 per room. The four-room apartments, containing two bedrooms, rent from \$58 to \$72 a month, which is an average of \$14.50 to \$18 a room. The five-room apartments, with three bedrooms, rent from \$68 to \$80, or an average of \$13.60 to \$16 a room per month . . ."<sup>8</sup>

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"The first report on the success of the Michigan Boulevard Garden Apartments Corporation, Chicago, was made at a small supper held in September to celebrate the first anniversary of the building. The apartments, which cover the entire city block from Forty-sixth to Forty-seventh street and Michigan to Wabash Avenue, represent the realization of an idea conceived by Julius Rosenwald—a demonstration that modern housing facilities for Negroes can be provided on a strictly business basis.

"The report at the end of the first six months of 1930 showed an occupancy of approximately 98 per cent. The net income over the six months' period was at an annual rate of about 6 per cent on capital stock. Depreciation and all other items of expense have been charged into the operation and cost of the building. In commenting on this, and on the fact that bad debts over the period were only one-eighth of 1 per cent, Mr. Rosenwald wrote to the assembled guests:

"It is now a little more than a year since the completion of the Apartments, and I should like to record the feeling of satisfaction which is mine, due to the splendid results of our great venture. By results I do not have in mind primarily the financial side, important and desirable as that is, but more particularly the fine type of tenants, with which you and your associates have been instrumental in filling the building. So far as I have learned, there has been little or no friction between the tenants and the management, or among the tenants themselves. This is highly gratifying, and I think great credit is due to the effectiveness of the Community Association and the Board of Advisors, who represent the tenants. In taking the interest they do, and I have no doubt frequently at considerable sacrifice to themselves, the members of this committee are rendering a service not only to the occupants of the building but to the Negroes of the entire country.

"Those living in our Apartments have proved that the Negro is a law-abiding citizen and a desirable tenant. In so doing they have added to the prestige of their race and have tended to encourage the investment of money

<sup>8</sup> "The Negro Coming Into His Own," *Housing*, June, 1929, Vol. 18, pp. 110-113.

in kindred projects, since it is known that such property is likely to receive the sort of treatment which might be expected from the best class of people, regardless of race. I have been especially impressed with the quiet that prevailed in the court, which is an indication that those who occupy the building must respect one another's rights.' . . . p. 151.

"The Michigan Boulevard Garden Apartments consists of 421 apartments of three, four and five rooms, representing an investment of \$2,700,000. The building occupies less than 40 per cent of the total space, the remainder being laid out in beautiful gardens, courts and a playground for small children. Two nursery schools are run in connection, one for the children of the mothers who work and must be gone all day, and the other for children whose mothers are at home. The building personnel, including the manager, is made up of Negroes." p. 151.<sup>4</sup>

#### Cincinnati, Ohio

"The industrial conditions of 1930 have naturally affected the activities of the Cincinnati Model Homes Company though not to the extent of actual harm. The wage earner with his income cut off or curtailed was compelled to economize on housing which resulted in an unhealthy shrinkage in the demand for housing. Giving up independent housekeeping and sharing living quarters with relatives or friends has become a practice among various industrial classes—with the inevitable outcome that all classes of dwelling property have suffered.

"The groups of buildings affected by these conditions were with only one exception groups occupied by white people. On one post-war group the company lost in vacancies and by defaults 29 per cent of its annual gross income. Another white group of pre-war construction that has always enjoyed full occupancy on account of the low rentals and its proximity to industrial establishments lost 11.5 per cent of its annual income in vacancies and defaults. The only colored group that made a poor showing was the Carr Street unit—consisting of ten two-room and three-room apartments and a store—entirely due to its location. The Negro that seeks our accommodations does not want to live in the West End 'bottoms.'

"Contrasting strikingly with this epidemic of vacancies in our

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<sup>4</sup> "Modern Housing for Negroes Brings Gratifying Results," *American City*, November, 1930, Vol. 43, p. 151.

white groups, we have been experiencing an unabated brisk demand for accommodations in our suburban colored groups. We are still the recipients of letters, telephone and personal calls from employers in behalf of their colored employees. And every time we have a vacancy we have a problem on hand: Who shall be the privileged one?

"The contrast in the housing situation of both races was vividly demonstrated last summer when we turned over to a Negro tenantry three groups occupied by whites with a total of 75 three-and four-room apartments. There was a rush for them and within two days 95 per cent of the accommodations were taken.

"But for the uncertainty of future prices in the construction line, conditions seem to favor our reentry on a construction programme—for Negroes of course. With our indebtedness off the slate, from now on we shall be accumulating annually in cash around \$25,000—representing depreciation charges and surpluses. We shall be confronted with the problem what to do with the money. It is not likely that our board of directors will favor active investment in other fields than industrial housing—a service to the community that has become a tradition with us.

"Houses—our builder assures us—can now be built at 25 per cent less than in 1929, which means a possibility of renting at \$7 or \$7.50 a room per month—a rather moderate rate for the present; and, perhaps, for the future.

"The present depression is not a hindrance. We shall benefit from the present keen competition among contractors, the eagerness of labor for employment and the anxiety of the material man to see cash. It is well to remember that our major activities were entered upon in 1914—a year with free soup kitchens open in all large cities of this country.

". . . Our total rental income for 1930 amounted to \$105,585.97—or close to \$2,000 less than in 1929. The losses in vacancies and by defaults were \$6,472.92 and represent 5.7 per cent of the gross rental income, as against 2.6 per cent in 1929. Over \$2,000 was lost in the above mentioned three groups in the interim between the white and colored occupancy. Forty per cent of the white tenants in these three groups took advantage of the change and carried off half or the whole of the last month's rent, amounting to \$323.80. Some of them argued that they were put to the inconvenience and expense through no default of theirs

and, therefore, were entitled to some recompense in free rental. In view of the industrial conditions, and, perhaps, because of some merit in the argument, we did not contest that claim.

"Examining our losses along racial lines, we find the losses in vacancies

Slightly over .....	1 per cent in the colored groups
Almost .....	13 per cent in the white groups
Losses by default .....	2.2 per cent in the colored groups
Losses by default .....	1.8 per cent in the white groups

"If we exclude losses by default in the Braxton Campbell Court groups—the group turned over to Negroes—which occurred under peculiar circumstances, the default among the white groups was 1 per cent of their annual rentals, or five times greater than among the Negro groups.

"While this favorable showing is due in great measure to the type of Negro we have been housing, in justice to the white man we must not overlook his greater mobility. In our experience we find three times as many whites move as Negroes. Proportionately, three times as many white tenants are exposed to the temptation to move without paying the last instalment of rent. We wonder if the turn-over were as great among Negroes as among whites, whether the figures would favor the Negro.

"This is further reflected in the delinquent list as of December 31st last. There the Negro appears with 1.7 per cent of his annual rentals delinquent, while the white man appears with only 0.8 per cent.

"The net results of the different groups vary from 1.1 per cent to 12 per cent. Eight groups netted us over 6 per cent; and eight below the 6 per cent level. All groups together netted a fraction over 5 per cent on the original investment.

". . . Our direct expenses for all groups were \$57,389.55. Excluding depreciation which is a fixed book charge, taxes (over which we have no control), insurance and other items that do not enter into maintenance proper, we find the cost of upkeep, including water, in 1930 was \$14.90 per room, as against \$14.91 in 1929; \$15.16 in 1928; \$16.73 in 1927; \$11.79 in 1926; and \$11.50 in 1925.

"The maintenance cost would have been less, but the changes of tenantry in the above-mentioned groups entailed quite an expenditure on interior renovating. Again, in 1930, 40 per cent of

our buildings received two coats of paint, as against 9 per cent of our holdings in 1929.

"So far there is no standard yard stick that can be applied to our cost of maintenance in order to determine whether our cost of operation is economic or extravagant. Our aim, though, must be to maintain a good standard of upkeep. We are constantly bearing in mind that our problem is as much a human one as it is a commercial one—perhaps, more so. The elevating influence of a high standard of upkeep on the human side of the problem cannot be overestimated. Where respectability ends, slum conditions begin. Undoubtedly our own standards have risen with years of experience and service. And it is rather a hopeful sign that we have not grown stale and are marching with the times . . ."<sup>5</sup>

### New York, New York

"But now have come the spacious garden apartments erected in Harlem by Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. The dominant note is simplicity, the decorative touches being few but judiciously disposed so as to break up the monotony of the plain wall surface. Complete harmony in the various materials employed is happily achieved. In the sparing use of carving, of wrought iron, etc., it was the designer's aim to employ the best craftsmanship and in each instance to concentrate the limited allowance on one point of beauty.

"Two rooms deep, the six independent buildings are set around the outside of a large rectangle, the interior being devoted to gardens. Every room has abundant access to sunlight and fresh air. In the center of the gardens is a play space where the little children may enjoy wholesome recreation under ideal conditions. They even have a clubroom of their own. What better safeguards against juvenile delinquency?

"All materials were bought shrewdly and are of good quality. The structures are sound and durable, without gaudy ornamentation. The entire project illustrates the truism that large-scale operations are the most economical . . ." p. 419.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Ginberg, Harris, "Interesting Facts About Model Houses and Their Tenants," *Housing*, March, 1931, Vol. 20, pp. 69-73.

<sup>6</sup> Bruce, Roscoe Conkling, "The Dunbar Apartment House, An Adventure in Community Building," *Southern Workman*, October, 1931, Vol. 60, pp. 417-428.

"To acquire in the traditional manner a deed to an individual house on the Island of Manhattan is now quite impossible for such of us as remain in the lower-wage brackets, so costly are land, union labor and building materials, but basically land.

"The cooperative apartment house on our nice little, tight little island offers at this hour the only practicable approach to home ownership. No individual tenant-subscriber's interest can be represented by a deed, for that would confer title from the center of the earth to the zenith, nullifying the rights of tenant-subscribers above and below. So, in lieu of the traditional deed to the home, one begins the purchase on a liberal instalment plan of the common stock of the housing corporation, leasing his apartment home. The basic principle is hoary with age, representing no innovation in the English law. And that apartment home is the man's castle, justifiably appealing to the same deep instincts and giving rise to the same exalted sentiments which motivated that simple but never to be forgotten song, *Home, Sweet Home*, in John Howard Payne's otherwise utterly forgotten opera, *Clari, The Maid of Milan*.

"At the beautiful and modern Paul Laurence Dunbar Apartments with their spacious gardens, it is upon the character of the applicant, rather than upon his financial resources, that the corporation in the main relies. For, the down payment is only fifty dollars per room and even that may now be distributed over as long a period as three years. The median wage of the initial 511 tenant-subscribers was only \$148.86 per month; it is, of course, appreciably less today. The project has, nevertheless, proved to be a sound and safe investment, our beloved founder, Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., limiting his return upon the capital outlay to 5½ per cent. All this without tax exemption or government subsidy of any kind.

"Now, since such results have been demonstrated to be attainable even with families selected from the community of color, the most disadvantaged group in American life, the flow of capital into large-scale housing projects for the masses of the American people, that is to say, income groups so low that they must look to others to provide the initial capital outlay, should and, we think, will be accelerated. Granted an efficient and social-minded management, the capitalist has here an altogether safe, gratifying, long-term investment.

"Intangibles are easily underrated. But, it is the psychic element that makes practicable the sale of cooperative apartment homes at a lower payment per room per month (at the Dunbar an average of \$14.50) than the very same apartments can be rented to the very same people. The crux of the matter is that a man's attitude toward that which he feels to be his own, is very different in practice from his attitude toward that which he knows to be his landlord's. At the Dunbar one enriches himself—not the landlord. And vandalism is unknown.

"Every dollar the tenant-subscriber pays into his cooperative increases his stake in the venture, impelling him to remain in his apartment home, if humanly possible, until the very end of his subscription agreement, though it be thirty years. Hence, there occurs a minimum tenant-subscriber turnover each and every year. We have entered upon our fifth year of operation and 76 per cent of our original tenant-subscribers are still with us.

"At the Dunbar we have a homogeneous group, a basic requisite, actual experience seems to indicate, to the continuing success of any cooperative housing project.

"Now, when the world of industry and commerce is unexpectedly overwhelmed with a depression as it is today, the tenant-subscriber in a cooperative housing project such as the Paul Laurence Dunbar Apartment quickly realizes the advantageousness of his position. This is true whether he remains in the project or, on due notice, for any reason vacates.

"Had he been merely paying rent in a commercial apartment house, he would have nought but a collection of worthless rent receipts and not one penny of accumulated savings. But, at the Dunbar the tenant-subscriber, for example, to the average 5-room apartment February 1, 1928, had, on January 31, 1932, or four years later, accumulated savings amounting to \$667.10. Though eager to work, should he nevertheless be out of a job for no fault of his own and hence unable to make any monthly payment for a while, these savings constitute a very substantial margin of safety. If he secures the consent of the social-minded corporation, he may still carry on. And in such case the corporation could consent without risking financial loss.

"No matter what a tenant-subscriber's accumulated savings may amount to at any time, his lease and subscription agreement specifies that every monthly payment be met in full upon the due date.

He is buying his apartment home—not renting it. So, it is just as much—if not more—in his interest to make every payment on or before the due date, as in his landlord's.

"From the point of view of the capitalist as well as that of the tenant-subscriber, the accumulated savings in the cooperative constitute, then, a solid assurance. When commercial apartment houses in the same region are largely vacant and in numerous instances the landlords are brought face to face with bankruptcy, the investor in the cooperative housing project is confronted with only a negligible number of vacancies—at the Dunbar not yet, in spite of the depression, as many as 6 per cent. With an alert and efficient management, he has every reasonable assurance against financial loss, since depressions do not last forever." <sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Bruce, Roscoe Conkling, *The Idea of Cooperative Housing as Exemplified by The Paul Laurence Dunbar Apartments in New York City*, prepared for the Committee on Negro Housing.

## APPENDIX VI

### THE BETTER HOMES CAMPAIGN

"Home improvement never ends. It does not matter how well built or how well kept a community, or how attractive its homes and gardens, or how carefully planned the city, there are always some houses in need of improvement. Our standards of living also are increasing. Old standards are no longer tolerable. New knowledge with regard to health, sanitation, ventilation, and fatigue indicates the need of raising standards if we are to promote a wholesome family life and guard the health of children. Poor food, inadequate diet, bad ventilation, undue fatigue in household operations, obviously react on the health of the entire family. So it is essential to remodel, modernize, and repair our houses, and provide adequate ventilation and sunlight, eliminate inconveniences and the necessity for long hours of labor, if we are to boast of an America of good homes.

"Negro citizens have not been backward in recognizing the necessity and the benefits to be derived from homes of a desirable standard. In the Better Homes campaign of 1931, 925 Negro leaders served as state, county, district and community chairmen in Better Homes campaigns. They organized the Negro citizens of their own communities and carried on home improvement campaigns, which in most instances resulted in extensive home improvement. Of the 8,418 chairmen (both white and Negro) which took part in the campaign of 1931, 925, or nearly 10 per cent, were Negro citizens. Fourteen states have been organized with Negro citizens as state leaders. Eleven districts and 130 counties have similar organizations. In addition, in 770 cities, towns and villages, Negro leaders have been selected to carry on this home improvement work. In 1928, three years previous, only 229 Negro chairmen were active in this work and in 1929 this number had increased to 388. Two years later in 1931, over 500 Negroes were added to this small band which now nearly approaches a thousand in number. This means that the number of Negro chairmen has become ten times as great over a period of six years—from 1926 to 1931.

"Arkansas alone boasted of 243 Negro chairmen, Mississippi

of 97, Alabama of 76, and both Texas and Virginia of more than fifty. Other states were less in number.

"In most of the communities represented by Negro leaders, Better Homes campaigns are held. It is the endeavor of the leader and the Better Homes committee which this leader organized, to carry on these campaigns and to disseminate education on methods and means of home improvement. Sometimes an actual demonstration house is built, equipped, and furnished by the Better Homes committee. In some places extensive tours of houses are held which show various features of architectural design, house planning, equipment, furnishing, planting of the grounds, etc. Hundreds of houses are shown in these tours. In still other communities, programs, lectures, and exhibits are the essentials of the Better Homes demonstration. These programs and lectures take place during Better Homes Week, which usually is the last week in April. During this particular week each community which is organized endeavors to demonstrate the meaning of home improvement and sets itself up as a shining example of the best that may be done with the money that is available, for most of these home improvement projects are conducted by the families themselves.

"In the 1931 campaign there were 133 Negro major demonstration houses—that is, 133 houses which were equipped and furnished and opened to the public during Better Homes Week. Some of these were new, some old, some remodeled and modernized and some improved in various minor ways. All have been set aside to show to the families of the communities in which they are located the best that can be afforded for the money that is to be spent. In addition to the major demonstration houses there were 809 houses for Negroes shown in tours. These tours usually last a day or a half-day and each house represents a specific feature of interest. All of the houses which are demonstrated in Better Homes in America campaigns are houses suitable for families of modest incomes, and many of them show what is meant by low-cost housing; for most of the homes demonstrated by Negro families in the 1931 campaign varied from as little as \$300 without land for a small, old or reconditioned house to those which cost as much as \$7,500.

"There were many demonstrations of outstanding merit conducted by Negro citizens in 1931. Three counties—Jefferson, Lee and St. Francis Counties in Arkansas—as well as the com-



*Courtesy of Better Homes in America*

The kitchen of the demonstration home which the Negroes of Albemarle County, Virginia, used to show what energy and paint could do.



*Courtesy of Better Homes in America*

The same kitchen of Charlottesville, Virginia, rest center after it had been reconditioned by Negro men, women and children of Albemarle County.

*Courtesy of Better Homes in America*  
An example of a well-kept private residence occupied by a Negro family. This house and its attractive grounds were demonstrated in 1930 by the Better Homes in America Committee of Greenville, South Carolina.



munity of East St. Louis, Illinois, were awarded honorable mention for the educational value of their demonstrations and the excellent organization work on the part of the Better Homes committees. There were, in addition to these, a number of other communities which studied carefully the housing and homemaking needs of the community and endeavored to assist in solving the housing problems as part of the Better Homes demonstrations.

"In Jefferson County, Arkansas, two demonstration houses and one home economics cottage were opened for inspection during Better Homes Week. One of the houses was a town house of new, frame construction, consisting of six rooms and bath and valued at about \$3,800. The second house was a remodeled house of five rooms and bath, which cost a little less than \$1,500. These two houses represented in the first, good planning, sound construction and conveniences; and in the second, a project in remodeling at small cost. The home economics cottage which was opened for inspection demonstrated the practical and useful work that students are doing as part of home economics instruction.

"In addition to these three demonstrations there was a tour of 57 houses, and home improvement contests which were participated in by several hundred people. Negro schools gave special health programs and pupils entered into home improvement work by carrying on small home repairs in their own homes. School-houses and grounds were also cleaned and put in order.

"One of the most outstanding features of the Jefferson County demonstration was a Better Homes School. A number of community chairmen in the county attended this school and various housing and homemaking problems were discussed, such as care and repair of homes, landscaping, garden demonstrations, contests of the separate rooms in the house, etc. After a survey was made, the kitchen was believed to be the most neglected room in the majority of homes and the emphasis was placed on this particular part of the demonstration. In addition to this, equipment, such as water systems and sewerage, was also discussed.

"In Jefferson County, as in other counties, considerable emphasis was placed on the value of vegetable gardens—particularly during this period of unemployment. In some of the demonstration gardens as many as twenty-nine varieties of vegetables were shown with information on the number of crops that may be grown. Such a demonstration is of particular value in supplying families

with food for adequate diet and also in reducing family expenditures.

"The main feature of the Lee County, Arkansas, demonstration was an extensive tour of improved places featuring special rooms, reconditioned furniture, built-in equipment, conveniences, etc. Over 600 Negro families participated and the schools demonstrated the refinishing of furniture and care and repair.

"In another Arkansas county—St. Francis—18 Negro demonstration houses were visited. Nearly 2,500 persons inspected these houses. The St. Francis County demonstration illustrates also scientific and carefully thought out campaign work, as a survey was conducted of the local housing needs. In this county 65 houses were shown in tours. The school cooperated by the planting of grounds, the making of gardens and in clean-up campaign work. Home economics departments exhibited handicraft and also had a display of clothing. The 4-H Club girls entered into homemaking contests and home beautification competitions. So successful was this campaign in St. Francis County that a house is planned for every community in the county for the 1932 demonstration.

"In East St. Louis, Illinois, 12 homes were included in the Better Homes tour. These houses varied in cost from \$500 to \$7,500. Extensive lecture programs and special meetings were also held and the schools made their contribution by exhibiting handicraft work and in clean-up campaigns. The home economics department gave a demonstration of furniture arrangement, and the boy and girl organizations, such as Boy Scouts, assisted in the clean-up of vacant lots.

"A unique but most interesting project was that included in Jackson, Mississippi, in which hundreds of families in the community participated. This was a contest between city blocks in order to stimulate home improvement and inspire families to beautify and clean up their premises. A major demonstration house was also a part of the campaign. This was well equipped and furnished with reconditioned furniture.

"In Pemiscot County, Missouri, the Jeanes Supervisors took an active part in the campaign work, by assisting in arranging the Better Homes tour. This tour of nine houses included as its special features living-room arrangement, bedroom furnishings, dining-room, including table setting, wall finishes and coverings, kitchens and kitchen equipment.

"The outstanding Negro demonstration of South Carolina was that of St. Helena Island. This Island has been awarded a number of Better Homes in America prizes as well as honorable mention. The Penn Normal and Industrial School of the Island has taken part in the Better Homes campaign work since the very beginning of Better Homes in America. In 1931, a house built by Negro students of the carpentry class of Penn School was the special feature. This demonstration house was constructed partially of lumber salvaged from the old house which was torn down. This cottage, dedicated 'Laurellen Cottage,' was not only built, equipped, and furnished, but the grounds were planned and planted.

"In addition to this major demonstration house, tours were made to improved houses on the Island. Churches, schools, and all organizations made their contribution to the campaign. Over 2,000 citizens and friends viewed some part of the demonstration. The slogan for each teacher in Penn School is 'Better Homes in St. Helena.'

"Perhaps one of the most unique and most worth while features of the program was the work done by what was known as the Tax Committee. Due to the fact that many of the Islanders are losing their homes because of failure to pay taxes or because of ignorance regarding taxation, educational work on taxation was planned as part of the Better Homes campaign. Representatives were called from each plantation to meet at the school in order to discuss the best methods of helping poor families and those families not familiar with tax laws. 'Tax Facts' and 'Tax Rules' were formulated, and the general principles of taxation were explained to the people. The amount of land which is slipping away from Islanders through ignorance as well as due to poverty was discussed and in the tax rules which were set up for this group the following were included:

1. Read the tax receipt.
2. Be sure you pay your own tax. Always give name and plantation.
3. Go to the tax sale or have your representative there.
4. Declare your tax returns.
5. All farm and wood land on St. Helena Island is valuable to the Negro people. When you lose your inheritance what have you to fall back on?

"Such problems as this which were included in the Better Homes campaign are of real educational value and are of considerable significance at present.

"The above are samples of some of the outstanding Negro demonstrations. There are hundreds of others which represent varied phases of home improvement work. In the 1931 campaign, Negro citizens as well as white entered into unemployment relief as part of Better Homes work. This unemployment relief has been in the form of home reconditioning and repair and in the raising of vegetable gardens. Although many families may not be able to afford the hire of outside labor in home repair, these home repair campaigns, even though the repair work is conducted by the families themselves, do add to some extent to the materials that are purchased. They add considerably, also, in putting houses and premises in good condition. For a house in good condition obviously has been increased in value . . .

"If one were to catalogue the results of these Negro Better Homes campaigns perhaps home improvement would receive the first place. However, there is a result that may be even greater and more far-reaching than that of the actual project of home improvement. This result is the desire created in Negro families for home improvement and a better standard of living."<sup>8</sup>

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"Six hundred and seventy-four committees were organized in all parts of the United States during the past year to arrange for participation of colored citizens in the nation-wide Better Homes campaign. This campaign is sponsored by Better Homes in America and has for its purpose the improvement of housing conditions for families of modest means.

"The movement, begun in 1922 as a private enterprise, was found to be of such value in bringing about improved conditions and homemaking practices, that it was established on a national basis in 1923, with Mr. Hoover, then Secretary of Commerce, as its president . . .

"The purposes of Better Homes in America are:

1. To make accessible to all citizens knowledge of high standards in house building, home furnishing and home life.
2. To encourage the building of sound, beautiful, single-family houses; and to encourage the reconditioning and remodeling of old houses.
3. To encourage thrift for home ownership, and to spread knowledge of methods of financing the purchase or building of a home.

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<sup>8</sup> Halbert, Blanche, "Home Improvement among Negro Families," *Southern Workman*, May, 1932, Vol. 61, No. 5, pp. 209-216.

4. To encourage general study of the housing problem and of problems of family life, and to help each community to profit from its study.
5. To encourage the furnishing of homes economically and in good taste.
6. To supply knowledge of the means of eliminating drudgery and waste of effort in housekeeping, and to spread information about public agencies which will assist housekeepers in their problems.
7. To encourage the establishment of courses of instruction in home economics in the public schools, and particularly the construction of home-economics cottages and home-management houses where girls in our public schools and colleges may, by actual practice, learn the best methods of conducting household operations and of homemaking.
8. To encourage the building of small houses by boys of vocational schools or vocational classes of public schools, with instruction in house upkeep and repair, so that the boys of the community may acquire an intelligent interest in the problems of householding and home ownership.
9. To promote the improvement of house lots, yards, and neighborhoods, and to encourage the making of home gardens and home playgrounds.
10. To extend knowledge of the ways of making home life happier, through the development of home music, home play, home arts and crafts, and the home library.
11. To encourage special study and discussion of the problem of character building in the home.

"These purposes are carried out in local communities by committees of interested citizens who, with the help of specialists, arrange programs designed to meet local needs. These programs vary according to the size and conditions of the communities, ranging through sings-meetings with talks on homemaking subjects, demonstrations of labor-saving devices and methods, showing of handmade and reconditioned articles of furniture, improvement contests which often involve entire communities, and the demonstration of houses, either new or reconditioned, suitable for families of modest income. Prominent colored citizens in all parts of the country are serving on these committees and are carrying out programs which are resulting in improved conditions of housing for the members of their communities. The chairmen of these committees, both men and women, have been selected and appointed by the national office because of their active interest in civic affairs.

"In addition to local and county Better Homes committees, state committees are formed for the purpose of adapting the national educational program to local needs and of bringing its service into every community in the state. Fourteen such committees have been organized . . .

"More than 7,000 communities took part in the 1930 Better Homes campaign which culminated in the observance of Better Homes Week, in April. As a means of calling public attention to the accomplishments in home improvement work, the national organization each year offers prizes ranging from \$50 to \$500 to communities presenting the most worth while educational programs. Many colored communities have participated in these awards during the past years, while still others have received honorable mention because of the excellence of their programs. Seven communities of colored people were included in the fifty-nine which were given honorable mention for the quality of their programs, while activities of colored people contributed to the programs in several of the prize-winning communities. Notable among these was the work done in Greenville, South Carolina, where the Better Homes campaign was sponsored by the Women's Bureau of the Chamber of Commerce. Three of the fourteen houses shown in different parts of the city to illustrate planning, planting, furnishing or improving that could be carried out at little or no cost, were planned especially for colored families and were furnished and demonstrated by subcommittees . . . .

". . . In Little Rock, Arkansas, which won fourth prize in the class of cities over 10,000, a survey of housing conditions of colored people revealed the fact that the average rent paid is \$10 a month. About 20 per cent of the colored citizens own their own homes. The committee selected for demonstration a three-room house which had been let and which the owner remodeled from a run-down house into a creditable cottage. This house was used to show a type of home that could be purchased and maintained on an income of \$1,000 to \$2,000. Its furnishings were selected from the stocks of local merchants and placed by a committee from the Colored Federation of Women's Clubs. When opened for inspection during Better Homes Week this house was visited by 7,450 persons. Forty ministers in colored churches used Better Homes as the subject of their sermons on April 27. Programs were held in a new school building and in the Y. W. C. A., with music by colored choirs and glee clubs. Tours were arranged to homes where improvement in planting was shown and also to the houses entered in last year's contest . . . As a project in community improvement, the Colored Parent-Teacher Association is undertaking the planting of school grounds.

"Warren County, Mississippi, won second prize in the county



Photograph by Faustett

*Courtesy of Better Homes in America*  
Well-furnished and attractively arranged living-room in Negro Better Homes demonstration house, Little Rock, Arkansas. Lamps of better design would have increased the attractiveness of this room.



group, with a program which included the showing of twelve houses, ranging in cost from \$250 to \$10,000. Three of these, costing \$250, \$300, and \$1,200 with furnishings costing \$300, \$300, and \$600, respectively, were provided for colored families. Two hundred and fifty colored citizens took part in contests to improve houses and grounds, and 500 attended programs. In addition to the home improvement work, forty-three school grounds were cleaned and beautified . . .

"Tours to eleven houses were made during Better Homes Week by two hundred colored citizens of Pulaski County, Arkansas, where they were given opportunity to inspect added rooms, improved fences, whitewashing, planting, . . . all of which were accomplished through the Better Homes campaign. Lectures and demonstrations were given at each home. The latter included table setting, bed making, and picture framing and hanging. The lecture topics included home beautification, health in the home, systematizing housework, and the year-round garden as a source of proper food. National Negro Health Week was correlated with the Better Homes program, which resulted in extensive cleaning of homes and premises. With the cooperation of parents and teachers, children of rural schools repaired houses, built walks, repaired doorsteps, leveled lawns, sodded yards, cleaned yards, built fences, moved wood-piles, painted houses, moved old fences and unsightly objects, planted shrubs and flowers, made window flower boxes, painted furniture, made window curtains and covers for dressers and chairs, improved rooms and whitewashed houses and outhouses . . .

"More than 7,000 local committees participated in carrying out plans for home improvement and arranging special programs during the observance of Better Homes Week, April 26 to May 2; and colored citizens throughout the nation have demonstrated that they, too, are no less eager than their fellow citizens for homes of comfort and beauty. That there are formidable handicaps to overcome in many communities none will deny, but there is reason to hope that within the next decade there will be a revolution in house building, home furnishing, and home life in America in which the colored citizens will play an important and happy role." \*

\* Storrow, Helen, "Better Homes for Negroes in America," *Opportunity*, June, 1931, Vol. 9, pp. 174-177.

## APPENDIX VII

### THE KITCHENETTE APARTMENT<sup>1</sup>

#### A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF APARTMENTS OCCUPIED BY WHITES AND NEGROES IN PARALLEL AREAS

##### Introduction

The questionnaire method was used. Sample used: Only one block in white neighborhood and only one block in Negro neighborhood. Therefore findings cannot be set forth as generally true of special area or typical of city, but are certainly true in this one sample. With prevalence of kitchenette apartments, however, in both territories, we are inclined to conclude that the converted kitchenette apartment is typical of interstitial areas.

##### Basis of Selection

These two blocks were chosen because they are equal in age. Both neighborhoods were formerly occupied by wealthy owners, followed by groups lower in social and economic scales. Houses have rather elaborate stone fronts, and were, in their day, stately dwellings.

	White Area	Negro Area
One - family Dwellings Made into Kitchenette Apartments.	Of 10 one-family dwellings visited, 8 converted into kitchenette apartments.	Of 13 one-family dwellings visited, 9 converted into kitchenette apartments.
Arrangement of Apartments	(1) Large double parlors subdivided and used for bedroom and kitchen. (2) Two small adjacent rooms—one as kitchen.	Ordinary clothes closet used for kitchen. Gas plate, ice box in bedroom. Result: Mildewed walls and wet floor areas.
Lighting Fixtures and Light	Old gas chandeliers and fixtures replaced by good electrical wiring and fixtures. All apartments arranged with access to natural daylight.	Many old unused gas chandeliers remained. Electrical installation in hallways. Extension cords attached and run through holes in walls into individual rooms.
Stairways	In both areas, need of varnish and stain obvious.	Four flights of stairways creaky and insecure.
Walls	Well papered. Landlords will paper but will not be responsible for woodwork and floors.	Sagging paper from ceiling and walls due to leaks in roofs, plumbing, and sweating radiators. Plaster fallen out, leaving large open spaces. Walls along stairway carved, nicked, and soiled.

<sup>1</sup> Prepared by George R. Arthur for the Urban Section of the Group on the Physical Aspects of Negro Housing, and submitted as an appendix to the report of the Committee on Negro Housing.

	White Area	Negro Area
Bathrooms	Tubs and wash basins in good condition. Average number of persons per bath—ten. Average number of water toilets per building—three.	Average number of persons per bath—sixteen; in one building, twenty-nine using one bathroom. Average number of water toilets per building—two. Average number of apartments per building—seven.
Back Porches	Crudely repaired but evidently firm.	Seven out of ten had ragged open spaces in floor, missing palings, and fallen, rotten back steps.
Basements	Good laundry and storage facilities.	Two flooded. (Survey made, in part, after heavy rain.) Cluttered; missing taps and faucets. In two instances, plumbing uprooted and impossible for laundry purposes. Upstairs, wet clothing hung in small kitchens, bedrooms, and over good banisters.
Rentals	Maximum per week per apartment—\$12.50 for three-room apartment, maid and janitor service. Average rental per week—\$7.15.	Maximum rental for three-room apartment per week—\$15.00. No maid service. Average rental per apartment per week—\$8.75.
Attitude of Landlords	Typical of both areas: "This type of housing is necessary for a certain type of people." "After all, it is only an investment. I am not a social worker." "They're not complaining. They are satisfied. Some of them can't pay for <i>this</i> ."	
Police Captain in the District	"You see the furnished kitchenette apartment is just the thing for the prostitute. All she has to do is to walk in with her handbag. She is able to pick up and leave just as easily."	
Types of People Who Occupy Apartments	Transient. Average time of occupancy, two weeks to six weeks. Unstable. Frequent change of address helps to conceal various individual obligations.	
Recommendation	In view of this type of housing, the converted kitchenette apartment which has been so generally accepted by both whites and Negroes we recommend that a further and more intensive study be made, soliciting the cooperation of such social agencies as the church, the Urban League, neighborhood housing associations, and landlords; that instead of converting old elaborate houses into homes for types now occupying such dwellings, a special type of housing be provided with sink and toilet facilities, light, air, fire protection, and privacy, at a rate in reach of groups according to varying economic and social levels.	

## APPENDIX VIII

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